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THE FAITHS
VARIETIES OF CHRISTIAN
EXPRESSION

Edited by L. P. JACKS,
M.A., LL.D.

THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT
IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH

THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH

BY

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

A WORD of explanation seems to be needed in regard to the title and the sub-title which have been chosen for this series.

There is *one* faith, says St. Paul; but the title of the series indicates more than one. A difficulty unquestionably exists at that point. It has not been overlooked.

Had the promoters of this series adopted the former point of view and called it "the Faith" instead of "the Faiths", they would have answered in advance an important question which the series itself should be left to answer. But, equally, by calling the series "the Faiths", instead of "the Faith", have they not prejudged the question in another way?

Of the two positions the latter seemed the less dogmatic. Let us take the world as we find it, in which the Faiths show themselves as a plurality, and then, if they are really one, or many varieties of the same, or if only one is true and the rest false, let the fact appear from the accounts they give of themselves.

On no other terms could full liberty have been accorded to the writers who contribute to the series; on no other terms could the task of editing the series be fairly carried out. It would have been obviously unfair to demand of each of the contributors that he should exhibit the faith that is in him as ultimately identical with the faith that is in each of his fellow-

contributors. It would have been obviously unfair to deny to any contributor the right to exhibit his own faith as the only true faith and all the rest as false. It would have been obviously unfair to assume that faith is necessarily singular because St. Paul so describes it. For the degree of authority to be attributed to the words of St. Paul is precisely one of the points on which the contributors to the series must be allowed to differ and to speak for themselves.

The same considerations apply to the sub-title of the series—"Varieties of Christian Expression". It may be that Christianity has only *one* mode of expression, and that it ceases to be Christianity when expressed in any other way. But to take that for granted would ill become the editor of such a series as this, and it would become him still worse if he deliberately planned the series so as to lead up to that conclusion. Again we must take the world as we find it. Among those who claim to be Christians many varieties of expression unquestionably exist which may or may not be only different ways of expressing the same original truth. So far as the editor is concerned this must be left an open question. If to some writers in the series it should seem good to deny the name of Christian to those whose modes of expression differ from their own, they must not be precluded from doing so, and the reader will judge for himself between the claim and the counter-claim. Certainly the hope is entertained that from the presentation of differences in this series there may emerge some unities hitherto unsuspected or dimly seen; but that will be as it may. The issue is not to be forced.

To present a complete logical justification of our title and sub-title is perhaps not possible, and such justification as we have here offered will probably commend itself only to the pragmatic mind. But objections taken to these titles will be found on examination to be objections to the series itself. How, we might ask, can any earnest and eminent Christian, believing his own variety of Christian expression to be better than the rest, logically justify his co-operation, in such a series as this, with other earnest and eminent Christians whose beliefs in that matter run counter to his own? None the less they are here co-operating.

That such co-operation has been found possible may be reckoned one of the signs of the times. The explanation of it lies, not in logic, but in charity.

L. P. JACKS

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

WHEN Dr. Jacks asked me to undertake the present volume I was not a little doubtful as to my right to do so, since the needs of the series seemed to demand a strong party man, and I personally have never desired to function as such. My own position, as suggested rather than developed in my Hulsean Lectures *Erasmus the Reformer*, is an eclectic one, and occupies ground which I believe to be distinctively Anglican. But to give expression to the truths for which the Evangelical Movement stands does not of necessity call for a party man, since these beliefs have now very largely permeated all schools of thought within the Church; indeed, I hold that no form of Christ's religion which is not truly Evangelical can hope long to survive, and even during its brief lifetime will be but a degenerate type, for Evangelicalism is the very quintessence of Christianity.

My final decision was further influenced by the conviction that of all the various schools of thought within the Church of England, the Liberal Evangelical is that which most nearly agrees with the Anglican position as I conceive of it. In this school, if it be not beguiled from the high road of Anglican development, lies the main hope of the Church of the future. What is here written, therefore, comes from one who is a convinced Evangelical, but from one who does not forget that he is an Anglican and also Liberal.

In days gone by the very name Evangelical was a thing of power, even a synonym of true religion; now, by one of those strange transitions, of which history, and not least ecclesiastical history, is so full, it has become a burden to whosoever bears it. To many minds, and those not alto-

gether ignorant or perverse, it is associated with the refusal to take the Eastward position in the Eucharist or with a morbid fear of "lights". The dislike of Evangelicalism is in part due to literary prejudice, for authors, from Thackeray onwards, have found in members of the school fit objects for their ridicule. In part it is due to the faults of Evangelicals themselves, and in particular to their narrow and suspicious outlook upon life and upon each other. The Evangelical has got it so firmly fixed into his mind that the children of this world are wiser than the children of light, that he "takes no risks", and even angels are carefully scrutinized lest they should prove to be emissaries of the prince of darkness.

This spirit of suspicion must be banished for ever if Evangelicals are to rise to the height of their glorious opportunity, and with it that dislike of novelty which is also characteristic of the conservative wing of the party. When this spirit is gone, there will come a new tolerance and a new understanding of the views of others such as now is seldom attempted amongst them. Evangelicalism, after all, is but a part of a larger whole, a school of thought within a Church; the recognition of this fact will save the party from futile and distressing attacks upon other Anglicans and enable them to use their energies in fighting sin and indifference—the foes common to all Christians. The attempt to turn the Church of England into a Puritan sect was tried in the seventeenth century, and by the aid of Parliament for a time it was successful. But no really loyal son of the Church ought in these days to desire to repeat it; rather he should seek his natural home with one of the numerous bodies of excellent Christian men and women outside the boundaries of the Anglican communion.

These are negative requirements, the removal of hindrances to the full exercise of the powers of Evangelicalism.

But a further development is needed. The old-fashioned "gospel" of the Methodists and Evangelicals is not sufficiently wide to meet all the needs of the present day. It is not sufficiently wide because it is not the full "gospel". I cannot help feeling that with all their keenness for preaching the "gospel", Evangelicals have never really faced the question of its real content. It seems to me to have been mostly Paulinism rather than complete Christianity, and even then not a complete Paulinism. The Dean of St. Paul's says of the doctrine of the Reformers that it is "not a true interpretation of St. Paul's religion. The Apostle of the Gentiles is far better understood now than in the days when an elaborate theology of a forensic type was built upon the Epistle to the Romans. The Christ-mysticism which is the heart of his personal faith is seen to be far more important for an understanding of his Christianity than his arguments about justification by faith and vicarious atonement".¹ There is enough of truth in this criticism to make Evangelicals seriously examine their own position.

The generation in which we are living is an impatient and restless generation. Short cuts to knowledge and small handbooks on great subjects witness alike to our over-occupation and our lack of the power of concentration. But not only is this generation impatient and restless, it is weary and disillusioned too. So many great efforts have been made, and their result has been so trifling; so often the mountain has been in labour and a mouse has been the only offspring. With all the noise and grandeur of a stormy sea, "dark as yonder midnight's ocean force", movements have arisen, and like waves on a sandy beach, have left nothing behind but foam—

Thundering like ramping hosts of warrior horse
To throw that faint thin line upon the shore!

¹ *The Platonic Tradition in English Religious Thought*, p. 30.

We have as a consequence come wearily to believe with the pessimist, that if this is the best of all possible worlds, everything in it is a necessary evil.

For the disease of a whole race man has no universal or infallible nostrum; nor can he frame clear-cut schemes which will by anticipation provide for every possible contingency; and if such schemes were framed, they would certainly be unworkable by anyone less than an archangel. We must learn to be content to sail under sealed orders, to walk by faith and not by sight, to follow the Christ as the Way. In the common round, the daily task, faithfully accomplished, lies our hope of healing for all the diseases of body, mind, and soul. Only must we move in accordance with a divine command and in the steps of a divine leader. For it is in the carrying out of the commands of Christ, and in these alone, that salvation will be found; in the realization that is that all our problems, of whatever nature, are ultimately spiritual problems, and can only be solved on the spiritual plane. The economist and the politician, valuable though their work may be, deal only with symptoms, the disease that lies behind them is a disease of the soul.

The new Evangelicalism must therefore preach a full "gospel", a message based not merely on the needs of the individual, but of society as a whole, a message above all which is derived from the Gospel which Jesus Himself preached. This Gospel alone is adequate to meet the needs of a broken and divided world, and by the proclamation of the new revelation of God as Love to bind up its wounds and stop their bleeding. The true Evangelical is he who desires to preach this gospel, not he who is content to stand exactly where the fathers stood more than a century ago. The spirit of Christ is moving over the chaos of this present age and revealing to His servants new methods and the knowledge

which comes from a wider experience; to reject His guiding is to shut oneself off from the light.

A comparison of the present volume with its two companions in the series, Canon Lacey's *Anglo-Catholic Faith* and Professor Gardner's *Modernism in the English Church*, will reveal a difference of treatment. This difference of treatment is deliberate, for since Evangelicalism is no cut-and-dried system of thought, but a living and developing spirit, it can best be understood as exhibited in the lives of those who have held it.¹ I have therefore made a wide use of biography and of history. The book has three parts. In Chapters I-V the story of the Movement from its earliest days up to the present age is told, then in Chapters VI-IX the doctrines of Evangelicalism are briefly summarized, and in the final chapter an attempt is made to suggest lines upon which the movement should develop in the future. It will be noticed that I have said nothing about Reunion. The omission is deliberate, as I do not think that it could profitably be discussed within the narrow limits which space would have allowed. The whole of this series is calculated to be a contribution towards Reunion, since the first requisite is understanding and sympathy, and the realization that truth is so vast that no individual and no body has a complete monopoly of it.

The days are evil and iniquity abounds. The standards and traditions which guided and controlled the early lives of most of us are no longer recognized. The past with its somewhat austere ideals and exacting sanctions no longer wields authority over a pleasure-loving and superficially educated race. On every hand lie ruined habitations of what was once held to be divine truth. Can we from these ruins, though not from them alone, build up a new edifice, an

¹ "Die Quelle kann nur gedacht werden, in sofern sie fließt."
(Goethe.)

edifice more noble and more abiding, because based on securer and more comprehensive foundations than the old? I believe that we can. But we shall do so, not by despising the old, or still less by despising the new, but in the spirit of Erasmus, by combining them firmly together into one harmonious system of life and truth.

Finally, I wish to express my indebtedness to those who have been my predecessors in writing on the Evangelicals, and in particular to Sir James Stephen, Dr. Stock, and the Rev. G. R. Balleine.

LEONARD ELLIOTT BINNS

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March 1928

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THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH

CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE MOVEMENT

THE history of the Evangelical Movement in the Church of England is a subject, as the title itself declares, beset by a twofold difficulty, since Evangelicalism is by no means confined to that Church, and at the same time the Church itself contains others besides Evangelicals. Thus there is the necessity of careful limitation in two distinct directions; on the one hand, that which concerns Evangelicalism as a whole is not our primary concern; nor, on the other, is the history of the fortunes of the Church of England as a whole, but only such portions of it as affected the school of thought with which we are primarily to deal.

The name Evangelical had already, even in the eighteenth century, a long and varied history behind it. It had been applied to Wycliffe and his followers, as well as to the Reformers, both on the Continent and here in England. As early as 1531 Sir Thomas More declares that "Those Evaungelicalles theimself cease not to pursue and punishe their bretherne". In the eighteenth century it first came to be applied to those of the clergy who supported the Methodist Revival; it is not definitely known whether the title arose as a term of condemnation on the part of an enemy, or as the proud boast of men who felt themselves to be standing

in a great succession. Balleine thinks that the word was first applied to the doctrines which these clergymen taught—teaching “obviously different from the fashionable teaching of morality”—and from the teaching it was applied to the preachers themselves.

In considering the history and development of the Evangelical School in the Church of England some kind of division will be found helpful. The most obvious arrangement is one into three periods: (a) From the beginnings to the rise of the Oxford Movement; (b) From the Oxford Movement to the eighties (Stock considers that the death of Tait in 1882 marked the end of one era in the Church of England and the succession of Benson the beginning of another); (c) From the eighties to the present day. The first period is that of the giants, the great heroes of the movement whose line stretches right back to Wesley himself, and is continued by men like Cecil, Newton, the Venns, Charles Simeon, and the godly laymen of the Clapham Sect. The second period is marked by the names of Lord Shaftesbury, Dean Close, Hugh McNeile, Hugh Stowell; by the coming of Revival Movements from over the seas; and by the beginnings of that great feeling of responsibility for the evangelization of the world which more especially characterizes the third period. To select the outstanding names of the third period is a more difficult undertaking; we are too close to the mountain-side to be able to discover the relative heights of its various peaks, too close it may be even to assure ourselves that all such peaks are within our view. These names, however, may be here set down as worthy of distinction: John Charles Ryle, first Bishop of Liverpool, Handley Moule, Douglas Thornton, and John Edwin Watts-Ditchfield, first Bishop of Chelmsford. The two predominant features of the period are the continued expansion of the great missionary societies, and in particular of the

C.M.S.; and, within the present century, the rise of a new type of Evangelical.

The Evangelical Movement in the Church of England was one of the offshoots of the great Methodist Revival of the eighteenth century. Although the Movement was affected by other influences and further modified by other conditions of the times in which it arose and through which its future course was to lie, this was supremely the impelling and governing force. The Revival had come like a breath of the Spirit of God into a hopeless and fainting world. On human grounds it cannot be accounted for save that in all ages the instinct for God implanted in mankind continually urges it to seek God afresh. It came without organization, and almost without expectation. It must not, however, be forgotten that manifestations of the same power which worked so mightily in Wesley and Whitefield were being exhibited in Wales and Cornwall—in both cases, be it noted, among men of Celtic or Iberian race. The sudden rise of Wesley and Whitefield should therefore not be isolated entirely from these other manifestations; the Spirit was working through various agents, but it was they who became the supreme examples of His wonder-working power.

In certain contemporary religious circles it is the fashion to bewail the Church's weakness and to lament over its small influence in the world at large. In such quarters, that pessimism may have its full measure of consideration, it is also customary to enlarge upon the spread of secularism and, with faint apprehension, to hymn the victories of unbelief. The best tonic for such a feeble Christianity is a study of the eighteenth century.

That century opened with all the promise of a summer dawn. Upon the throne there sat a prudent sovereign who held the willing allegiance of her subjects and encouraged

them in the exhibition of their powers. Both Church and State were remarkable for much commendable activity. With the accession of the Georges all was changed, and the policy of the Whig Ministers, who then obtained a long lease of power, laid a restraining hand on all manifestations of energy. Peace at any price was the maxim of Walpole and his lesser associates; and peace they obtained and with it much outward prosperity. But as a consequence there swept over the country a blighting wave of materialism. Drunkenness became the rule in every class, from the politician downwards. Obscenity and immorality were a matter of course; the King, the Prince of Wales, and the Prime Minister were unashamed adulterers. Crime was rampant; the barbarous punishments, themselves a fitting symptom of a cruel age, which were vainly set to limit it, only made the criminals more desperate. Society in its general habits had sadly declined from the standard of earlier days, and in its efforts to get away from the narrow austerities of Puritanism had become libertine in both thought and morals. But since no society is ever entirely corrupt, there were no doubt in many a quiet and secluded spot homes where the fear of God ruled in undisputed supremacy and where hearts were touched by the divine fire.

In an atmosphere of such stagnant humidity religion had but a feeble life; indeed the greater part of mankind no longer paid it any regard. "In England", wrote a cynical Frenchman, "there is no religion, and the subject, if mentioned in society, excites nothing but laughter." Even the great Bishop Butler had to make the melancholy confession that most men had ceased to look upon Christianity as a subject even for inquiry, its fictitious nature being so obvious. This attitude is almost inexplicable when we remember that the Church was then congratulating itself upon one of its most notable intellectual triumphs, the

complete vanquishing of the Deists. But the victory over the Deists was indeed a Pyrrhic victory, the severity of the losses leaving the Church in a worse state than before the contest began. In the dry bitterness of the struggle all the characteristic graces of the Gospel had been lost or thrown aside; beauty and charm, life and power, had all taken flight during the long tediousness of the wordy conflict. In the days of Elizabeth and of the Carolines theology had been a part of literature, and learned divines were not afraid to exhibit their undoubted literary powers in less sacred fields; whilst in their theological writings grace and distinction waited upon their ready pens. The controversy with the Deists put a term to this happy condition of affairs. One valuable lesson, however, may be learned from it, namely: that the Church may win intellectual victories and yet be barren of real power. On the other side, the Revival, when it came, showed that live burning conviction is a more potent force than the keenest logic, and that a living faith is too much in earnest, has too intense a hold on the realities and urgency of life, to wait for its refinements.

Balleine calls this age the Glacial Epoch in Church History. "Puritan enthusiasm", he says, "had been driven out at the Restoration, and High Church enthusiasm had departed with the Nonjurors; only the cautious and the colourless remained, Laodiceans, whose ideal Church was neither hot nor cold." Those who took their duties seriously preached a kind of high morality devoid of power or grace. But the many, more negligent and careless, left the charge of their flocks to curates or to chance. Hannah More found that in a large district in the Mendips the only resident clergyman was the Vicar of Axbridge, and even he was "intoxicated about six times a week, and very frequently is prevented from preaching by two black eyes honestly earned by fighting". Nonconformity was of little help as an

auxiliary, for Nonconformity was practically defunct, and such congregations as had survived were mostly Unitarian in doctrine. Dissent was to owe more to the Revival than even the Church.

Into the details of the Methodist Revival it is impossible here to enter. The two great names of Wesley and Whitefield survived their day and generation as few have been privileged to do, and they passed over, leaving behind them a revived Church and a newly awakened nation. Whitefield was undoubtedly one of the greatest natural orators of this or any other country, and his power of compelling interest and sympathy, although its effects, as was natural, soon wore off, was testified to by the most unlikely of auditors, from sceptics like Hume and Franklin to courtiers like Pulteney and Bolingbroke. Much of his power was due to the conscious and deliberate exercise of his talents, and even great actors like Foote and Garrick frequently attended Whitefield's discourses in order to study his methods. At the same time his earnest zeal and complete sincerity triumphed over those dangers of unnaturalness, and even of hypocrisy, which must ever wait upon preachers who cultivate oratory as an art.

But it is to John Wesley that the Movement owes its more lasting power and influence. He had not Whitefield's oratorical gifts nor his wild enthusiasm: but he had gifts which were greater because less evident. A power of simple yet incisive preaching, a spirit of indomitable courage and perseverance, and a stern self-mastery which marked him out in advance as the leader, and the autocratic leader, in any enterprise with which he chose to associate himself. Once the faith of the servant had been exchanged, a happy bargain, for that of the son; once the prejudice against field-preaching, an uncongenial task even to the end, had been overcome; John Wesley came forth as the inspired messenger of

God spreading the light of the Gospel from one end of England to the other. Opposition and persecution rather than daunting him seemed only to feed the steady glow within; men would call him, according to their different tastes, Jacobite, Puritan, or Jesuit, he cared not; the way lay before him, and the work had to be done ere the night should come in which no man can work. In spite of his mistakes of judgement, and they were not few, in spite of his autocratic ways, and they were pronounced, he was one of the world's greatest men, one of the Church's most faithful servants, a true evangelist and reviver of the flock of Christ.

Come where the Abbey's great lantern burns full o'er the wave;
Once this lamp of St. Peter was low and dim;
Then Christ to His English another Apostle gave;
Souls of the righteous, bless ye the Lord for him.

To the results of the Revival there is abundant testimony, and that of the highest value, since it comes amongst other sources from those whose natural prejudices could certainly not have tempted them into the slightest exaggeration. Two only need be cited. In his *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* Mr. Lecky gives the following estimate of the service rendered by the Revival: "The doctrines the Methodist teacher taught, the theory of life he enforced, proved themselves capable of arousing in great masses of men an enthusiasm of piety which was hardly surpassed in the first days of Christianity, of eradicating inveterate vices, of fixing and directing impulsive and tempestuous natures that were rapidly hastening towards the abyss. Methodism planted a fervid and enduring religious sentiment in the midst of the most brutal and neglected portions of the population." A Roman Catholic writer, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, is equally emphatic: "Many of us are unable to have any

sympathy with the doctrines which Wesley taught, but the man must have no religious feeling of any kind who does not recognize the unspeakable value of the great reforms which he and Whitefield introduced. They inspired the souls of poor and commonplace creatures with all the zealot's fire and all the martyr's endurance. They pierced through the dull, vulgar, contaminated hideousness of low and vicious life, and sent streaming in upon it the light of a higher world and a brighter law."

But the questions will be asked, How did the Movement spring up and what were the causes which led to Methodist and Evangelical separating the one from the other? The reasons, as in the case of every separation, are many and obscure. To dispel the darkness which lies over them and clearly to assess the blame is impossible: I can only hope by stating them in part to indicate them. Two causes stand out prominently: on the one side there was the unsympathetic attitude of the Church authorities; on the other the defects in Wesley's own character. The combination of these factors in the environment in which they were placed sufficiently accounts for the separation.

The Church of England on no occasion passed any official judgement, either favourable or otherwise, on the Methodists. It was therefore the attitude and the action of individuals which declared the opposition against which the Revivalists laboured. The Bishops, so far as we know, held no consultations on the Movement, and whatever action they took, each in his own diocese, was prompted by no consistent or deliberate policy of the episcopate as a whole. For the most part they were out of touch with the masses; some of them, like the parish clergy, were non-resident; they were in addition exceedingly afraid of any kind of enthusiasm. Thus it came about that the Methodists found but little countenance or support in Bishops' palaces, and though now and then a

spiritual Peer might be tempted to go to hear George Whitefield—in Lady Huntingdon's chapel at Bath there was a "Nicodemus corner" where they could hear without being seen—there followed no practical result from the visit. Certain of the Bishops, amongst whom Bishop Lavington and Bishop Warburton especially distinguished themselves for violence, definitely opposed the Movement, and the rest disregarded it. The same attitude of mind was found amongst the parochial clergy as amongst their ecclesiastical superiors. Open opposition based mainly upon ignorance and indifference in the many; but, here is a distinguishing mark, active support and welcome from the few.

To the very end, in spite of misrepresentations, John Wesley himself remained loyal to the Church of his baptism, and strangely enough he retained also the fond hope that his followers would ever remain as loyal as himself. Repeatedly he warned them of the consequences of any attempt at schism. In 1787 he emphatically declared that "when the Methodists leave the Church of England, God will leave them"; again in the *Arminian Magazine* for April 1790 he wrote: "I live and die a member of the Church of England, and none who regard my judgement or advice will ever separate from it." Not long before his death in the following year he made a still further appeal to his preachers: "Be Churchmen still! Do not cast away the peculiar glory which God hath put upon you."

John Wesley's Churchmanship expressed itself negatively in an almost intolerant and contemptuous attitude towards Dissenters of all classes, which it is remarkable to find in so broadminded a Christian.

On one occasion he writes: "As most of the hearers were Dissenters, I did not expect to do much good. However, I have done my duty: God will look to the event." And again he writes: "Here are no Papists, no Dissenters of any kind;

no Calvinists, no disputers. Here is no opposition either from the Governor, a mild humane man, from the Bishop, a good man, or from the bulk of the clergy."

But in spite of all Wesley's protests and appeals, when once his strong controlling hand was removed, the bulk of his followers seceded from the Church and formed a new communion. This communion has now grown so vast as to exceed in numbers the parent society; none the less, the true followers of John Wesley, and the only body which in strictness is entitled to call itself Wesleyan, is the Evangelical party in the Church of England.

Long before his death the coming secession had been foreseen by men of insight, and at the door of Wesley himself must be laid the chief responsibility for this regrettable happening. The first indisputable step towards separation was undoubtedly the setting apart of Dr. Coke as Superintendent, or Bishop, over the brethren in America. There was much to be said in favour of making some provision for the Methodists in America, who had been left by the War of Independence in isolation, and Wesley could think of no better way when once the Bishop of London had refused to ordain ministers for them. Both Wesley and Coke himself were not a little uneasy over their doings, and the uneasiness was increased by the consecration only two months later of Bishop Segrave for work in America.

The second step was the licensing in 1787 of the meeting-houses as Dissenting chapels. This course of action became necessary in order to save the Methodists from being fined under the Conventicles Act, and, like the ordinations, was only adopted by Wesley with great reluctance. Five years earlier Lady Huntingdon had in like circumstances taken advantage of the same Act to legalize the position of some of her chapels—thus starting the body known as Lady Huntingdon's Connexion. When the meeting-houses were

first established Wesley would never allow them to be used—unless for very exceptional reasons—during the time of Church services. In 1788 this rule was abolished, except on Sacrament Sunday, and thus another advance towards separation was made.

The final act which made any real harmony impossible was the setting up in 1791, soon after Wesley's death, of the circuit system, and its application in lieu of the ancient parishes to the whole of the United Kingdom. After this it mattered little to the Church of England that permission was given (in 1795) for the administration of Holy Communion, which hitherto, in spite of the split, had only been done by clergymen, by Methodist preachers. This step, like the rest, was undertaken with reluctance and the custom discouraged, but once introduced, it became after a time the universal usage in Methodist places of worship.

The beginnings of the separation of the adherents of the Revival into Methodists and Evangelicals, although to draw any absolute line of demarcation would have been impossible, had arisen long before the death of Wesley had removed the force which kept them both, nominally at least, within the bounds of the same communion.

John Wesley, in spite of a passionate loyalty to the Church of England, found the parochial system an interference with his mission; accordingly he deliberately ignored it and took "the world for his parish". The Methodists followed his lead, and thus one of the readiest tests of a man's position in the Movement came to be his attitude on this question. Not a few, however, of the Evangelicals, in spite of their belief in the parochial system, found themselves compelled to invade, for the sake of needy and neglected souls, the parishes of their neighbours, or it would be more correct to say "the neighbouring parishes", since in most cases the incumbent himself was an absentee. Grimshaw of

Haworth thus offended, and so did a man of not dissimilar character, Berridge of Everton, who evangelized vast tracts in the Midlands. Other Evangelicals like Fletcher of Madeley found in their own parishes enough to occupy all their thoughts and energies. From the least to the greatest of the Evangelicals, even of those who itinerated, there was a real recognition of the primary claims of the parish and of the responsibility of the minister for his own flock. The work of the parish priest was more important than that of the missionary. "I wish well to irregulars (*sic*) and itinerants", wrote John Newton; "I am content that they should labour that way who have not talents to support the character of a parochial minister; but I think you are qualified for more important service."

Another test was provided by the licensing of the meeting-houses as Dissenting chapels. To the Methodist it signified little, being at best a regrettable occurrence. To the Evangelical it was a clear sign that he must no longer, in loyalty to his Church, take part with the frequenters of such assemblies. It was for this reason that all Lady Huntingdon's chaplains resigned their office; and even the doughty Grimshaw, in spite of deep sorrow, could not countenance a step so seriously alien to loyal adherence to the Church: "This licensing is a matter I never expected to have seen. They are no longer members of the Church of England. It is time for me to disown all connexion with them."

CHAPTER II

THE EVANGELICAL FATHERS

A MOVEMENT attracts adherents in part by the loftiness of its declared aims, in part by the motives which it puts forward as inspiring them, but above all by the character and personality of its leaders. Leaders must show forth the ideals for which the movement stands already in process of realization; otherwise their principles, however pure and noble, have the weakness of being merely academic ideas. The Evangelical Movement was fortunate in its early leaders. It is true that there was among them no man of outstanding genius such as Newman; but they had saints in plenty, men who were notable, not for originality or depth of thought, but for strength and variety of character; men who promoted the objects of the Movement more by the nobility of their example than by the novelty of their teaching. There was among them a wide difference in character and temperament, in training and habits of thought; but one and all were marked by a high spirit of purity and devotion, by vigour and zeal—a zeal, perhaps, not always checked and controlled by discretion—and by an intense desire for the salvation of their fellow-men.

Sir James Stephen, whose brilliant pen has recorded for all time the story of the first generation, the apostolic age, of the Evangelical Movement, selected from the number of its leaders four whom he designates as the “four Evangelists”; these were John Newton, Thomas Scott, Joseph Milner, and Henry Venn. “Newton was celebrated”, he says, “as the great living example of the regenerating efficacy of the principles of his school. Scott was their interpreter of

Holy Scripture, Milner their ecclesiastical historian, Venn their systematic teacher of the whole Christian institutes." The importance, although it was not an exclusive importance, of these men demands for each of them a fuller treatment.

A perusal of the life of John Newton must leave any reader possessed of either sympathy or imagination with a feeling of wonder and bewilderment that is little short of awe. Well might Newton paint up over the mantelpiece of his study at Olney, where it still remains amongst other texts, the words from Deuteronomy: "But thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee." Few men have managed to crowd into their life so much of sin and of doubtful adventure, and yet through it all to retain noble and admirable virtues. Newton had the advantage of a religious upbringing, at least in early years. At the age of twelve he went to sea in a merchant ship of which his father was the captain. After coming under various influences, religious and non-religious, he became when only sixteen a sceptic through reading the works of Shaftesbury. But further influence was about to enter into his life, an influence which hung over its dark night like the patient gleam of a star, never forgotten, yet often but little heeded. It happened that on one occasion when Newton was on his way to join his ship he met and loved Mary Catlett, then a child scarcely fourteen years old; immediately his voyage was abandoned, and instead he gave himself up to romantic dreams of an immediate and blissful union. But much suffering and much sin was to fill up the seven years which passed before his dreams could be realized. On another occasion he was seized by a press-gang and sent on board H.M.S. *Harwich*, then sailing to the East Indies. By his own talents, or the influence of his father, he was made a midshipman,

but he deserted in order to see his lady and was taken, and as a punishment reduced to the ranks. Thereupon by some means or other he was able to exchange into a trader bound for the African coast. He rejoiced in his new surroundings, for now he could be as abandoned as he liked, "and from this time", he says, "I was exceedingly vile indeed, little, if anything, short of that animated description of an almost irrecoverable state, which we have in 2 Peter ii. 14". But misery and a deeper degradation than even he had anticipated awaited him, and he became practically the slave of the black mistress of a white slave-dealer. From this wretched woman he suffered every imaginable act of tyranny, but he was able from time to time to forget his sorrows in working out the problems in Barrow's Euclid! A change of masters brought better fortunes and even a share in a slave factory. Then at the persuasion of a friend of his family he returned home, and after a short time obtained the command of a slaver. He was now in a position to marry, and the end of his first voyage saw the beginnings of his new life with Mary Catlett.

Three more voyages to Africa were carried out, when a dangerous illness made another career essential, and after a time his thoughts turned to ordination. This may seem a strange direction for them to take, as indeed it was in view of his slight qualifications. For some time, however, although still captain of a slaver, according to his own lights he had been a Christian—a rather curious combination, even in those less particular days.

"Old ocean probably never before or since floated such another slave ship. On board of her, indeed, were to be seen all the ordinary phenomena. Packed together like herrings, stifled, sick and broken-hearted, the negroes in that aquatic Pandemonium died after making futile attempts at insurrection. But, separated by a single plank from his victims, the

voice of their gaoler might be heard, day by day, conducting the prayers of his ship's company, and, as he assures us, experiencing on his last voyage to Guinea 'sweeter and more frequent hours of divine communion' than he had ever elsewhere known."

His desire for Orders was at length gratified by the help of some of the Evangelical leaders, and when not far short of forty he was ordained to the curacy of Olney in Buckinghamshire. Here he composed a number of works on religious subjects and wrote hymns for the use of his parishioners. In this latter exercise his efforts were reinforced by the considerable talents of his friend and penitent, William Cowper.

Cowper had come to Olney with the Unwins, the family with whom he found a grateful refuge after a distressing mental breakdown had brought to a close his career as a barrister. The remainder of his life was tinged with melancholy, but his sufferings had taught him to find comfort outside his own resources; the stricken deer, to use Cowper's own expression, was—

Found by One Who had Himself
Been hurt by the archers.

The Olney Hymns, the joint production of the two friends, include some of the finest of such compositions in our language. From Newton came, amongst many others, "Approach, my soul, the Mercy Seat", "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds", "Glorious things of Thee are spoken"; whilst Cowper's pen was responsible for "Hark, my soul, it is the Lord", "There is a fountain filled with blood", "Oh for a closer walk with God", "God moves in a mysterious way", and other well-known hymns. Overton criticized these hymns on the ground of their defective Church teaching. Of Book II on "Seasons" he wrote: "Presumably Church Seasons, as they are written by a

clergyman for the edification of his parishioners, and to be used by them in the Church Services. The first season, then, it appears, is the 'New Year', which is markedly omitted in the Prayer Book, the Church's year beginning at Advent. After an inordinately large number of hymns on this season, which is no Church season at all, the next seasons are winter, summer, hay-time, harvest. Then it seems to have dawned upon the good man that the Church, of which he is a minister, says something about Christmas; so we have three hymns—only three—while the New Year has at least thirty—more or less appropriate to Christmas, and then we pass on to another Church season 'Saturday evening', and then to one more, 'The Close of the Year'. Positively not one word in the 'Seasons' of Advent, Epiphany, Lent, Good Friday, Eastertide, Whitsuntide!"¹

Newton laboured diligently at Olney for many years. Some idea of his activities can be obtained from reading through the following list of his regular engagements:—

Sunday.—6 a.m. Prayer Meeting.

Morning, Afternoon, Evening. Full service with sermon.

8 p.m. Meeting for Prayer and Hymn-singing in the Vicarage.

Monday.—*Evening.* Men's Bible Class.

Tuesday.—5 a.m. Prayer Meeting (good average attendance).

Evening. Prayer Meeting (the largest meeting of the week).

Wednesday.—Classes for young people and inquirers.

Thursday.—*Afternoon.* Children's Meeting "to reason with them and to explain the Scriptures in their own little way."

Evening. Service in Church with sermon—attended by people from many of the villages round.

Friday.—*Evening.* Meeting for Members of his Society.²

¹ *The Evangelical Revival*, p. 150.

² This list has been compiled from his own diary and appears in Balleine, *Hist. of the Evang. Party*, p. 105.

But in spite of all his efforts he could make but little progress, and at length the feelings of his parishioners being definitely set against him, and despairing of any further attempt to work there, he left the village to become, by the influence of John Thornton, Rector of the important living of St. Mary Woolnoth, in Lombard Street. Here for twenty-seven long years he remained, until, at the advanced age of eighty-two, his life's voyage was ended and the final harbour reached.

Newton's power and influence were almost unbounded in the Evangelical world, and by many his ministry was valued beyond that of even the greatest of his contemporaries. It was not that he was a great or moving preacher, but that his wide experience of life, and the depths into which he had plunged, gave him a clear insight into the failings of others, and yet did not rob them of his sympathy. As a kind of Evangelical "confessor" he had no rival. It was the desire to be under Newton's pastoral care which moved the Unwins to settle at Olney, and from Newton, it can hardly be doubted, Cowper received no little help in fighting his ever-threatening malady. Much of this wider pastoral office was discharged by means of letters—a happy circumstance, since their preservation enables us to understand something of the skill and tenderness with which he dealt with souls.

In an early passage of the greatest of modern spiritual autobiographies, Cardinal Newman acknowledges the influence of the next of the Evangelical leaders, Thomas Scott the Commentator, "to whom (humanly speaking)", he says, "I almost owe my soul". If Newman could in any sense be said to owe his soul to Thomas Scott, Thomas Scott himself was debtor in the same degree to John Newton.

Thomas Scott was born in Lincolnshire of poor parents. On leaving school he was apprenticed to a medical prac-

tioner, by whom for some not quite understood reason he was sent back to his home. For the next nine years he followed his father's calling and worked as a grazier. Ambition stirred within him, and he began to desire some more distinguished and less monotonous occupation. His education had included a smattering of the elements of Greek and Latin; these elements he proceeded to recollect and improve, and after many difficulties and hardships at last succeeded in being ordained. In taking this step he was inspired by no lofty motives, and only the laxity of his conscience—for he was at the time a convinced Unitarian—made it at all possible. In the candid and vivid account of his own religious experience, entitled *The Force of Truth*, this is all freely admitted. "After having concealed my real sentiments under the mask of general expressions, after having subscribed articles directly contrary to what I believed, after having declared in the most solemn manner that I engaged myself to be inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, not believing that there was any Holy Ghost, on September 20, 1772, I was ordained deacon."

A number of curacies in Buckinghamshire gave the ambitious aspirant to literary honours, for such Scott was, few opportunities of gaining his desire; the practical duties of his ministerial life had small attraction for him, and in his preaching he was controversial and above the heads of his hearers. But the man was not so purely intellectual as to be entirely beyond feeling the unworthiness of his position. The occasion of his awakening has been recorded by himself. "Two of my parishioners", he wrote, "a man and his wife, lay at the point of death. I had heard of the circumstances, but, not being sent for, I took no notice of it, till one evening—the woman being now dead and the man dying—I heard that my neighbour Mr. Newton had been several times to visit them. Immediately my conscience

reproached me with being shamefully negligent in sitting at home within a few doors of dying persons and never going to visit them. It occurred to me that whatever contempt I might have for Mr. Newton's doctrines, I must acknowledge his practice to be more consistent with the ministerial character than my own."

But this awakening to the need for a worthier conception of his office left his deficiencies in doctrine untouched. Indeed, he challenged Newton to a regular discussion of their differences. Newton declined the contest with wisdom and tact, but the correspondence revealed his strength and determined Scott to study afresh the grounds of his beliefs and denials. He began with Locke *On the Reasonableness of Christianity*, but in the end concentrated on the Scriptures, though he was much indebted, like many of his contemporaries, to William Law and to Hooker. After three years of the most intense application, the conclusion of his inquiries was reached, and the Christian faith as taught by the Church of England joyously accepted.

When Newton left Olney, Scott succeeded him, but his ministry was, if anything, less acceptable to the inhabitants of that particular parish, and after a few years he moved to London, to become morning preacher at the Lock Hospital. It was at this time that the Commentary on the Bible, which made his name for so long famous in Evangelical circles, was written. The work was issued in weekly parts, and in such haste that little if any reference could be made to the opinions of other people. In the end it became an almost intolerable burden, but one which he forced himself to bear, although ill-health, bereavement, and theological controversy were added to his labours.

After eighteen years of faithful if not very successful ministry—his preaching was spoilt by the habit of scolding his people—at the Lock Hospital, Scott was presented to

the living of Aston Sandford, in his old county of Buckinghamshire; and there, like a second Polycarp, he lingered on into the sub-apostolic age, dying in 1821. Newman, who as we have seen revered him very deeply, had long been contemplating a visit to his parsonage when the news of his death came to make it impossible.

Thomas Scott was fortunate in his children. His three sons all took Orders, and even in the fourth generation a fourth Thomas Scott was Vicar of West Ham (1868-1891).

Joseph Milner, the next of the early leaders, was, like Newton and Scott, born in comparatively humble circumstances, but his outstanding gifts caused him to be sent up to Cambridge. In the course of time he took Orders and became Headmaster of Hull Grammar School and lecturer at the Parish Church. A deepening of his religious convictions caused him to throw in his lot, much to the disgust of his friends, with the despised Evangelicals, and for years he used his double opportunity, as a schoolmaster and as a preacher, to further the growing cause.

His leisure moments and his very considerable abilities and learning Milner devoted to carrying out Newton's plan for a Church History on novel lines. The object of this history was to demonstrate, in reply to Roman Catholic critics, that "from the days of Peter and of Paul there had been an unbroken succession of Christian teachers and of Christian societies, among whom the eternal fire of gospel truth had burnt pure and undefiled by the errors which were abjured in the sixteenth century by the half of Christendom."^{*}

The scheme was a vast one, and perhaps not capable of any complete realization, but Milner carried his work down

^{*} It is interesting to observe that the same idea arose in the fertile brain of Thomas Arnold, and is developed in a letter to Archbishop Whately dated May 4, 1836.

to the middle of the thirteenth century, leaving to his brother Isaac the task of continuing it. Perhaps the most important effect of his labours was to familiarize English Churchmen with the almost forgotten writers of the early Church—though it must not be forgotten that John Wesley, through the influence of his ill-fated friend John Clayton, was widely read in them. Amongst those who were thus affected was a boy of fifteen, whose name has already appeared in these pages, the future Cardinal Newman. "I read Joseph Milner's *Church History*", he says, "and was nothing short of enamoured of the long extracts from St. Augustine and the other Fathers which I found there."¹

We now come to the last, and perhaps the greatest, of the "four Evangelists", Henry Venn, Vicar of Huddersfield, and later Rector of Yelling in Huntingdonshire. Venn was a man of far different origin from his three peers, as the clerical profession was hereditary in his family. His career, also, was less chequered than those of Newton and Scott.

After a short curacy at Clapham, afterwards to be the scene of his son's profitable ministry, he came in 1759 to the small country town of Huddersfield. The parish covered a very large area, although the population was inconsiderable, and much of his time was spent in riding about the country visiting outlying farms and hamlets. To the Parish Church itself he drew such large congregations that often enough the building would not hold them, and the sermon had to be preached in the churchyard. For eleven years he laboured with such devotion and enthusiasm that his health completely broke down, and he had to accept an easier post. This he found in the tiny parish of Yelling, and so much was his strength renewed in this quieter sphere that for

¹ Amongst others who had some knowledge of the Fathers was, strangely enough, Lord Palmerston, a man of wide and eccentric learning.

twenty-six years more he carried on his noble work, not only of caring for the souls of his parishioners, but also of those who came to him—and they were many—seeking spiritual advice and counsel. At length his life drew to its close, but so great was his desire to depart and be with his Saviour that it was said that the joy of dying kept him alive.

Not a little of the fame which came to him was due to his authorship of the treatise *The Complete Duty of Man*. This work was definitely intended to take the place of *The Whole Duty of Man*, the anonymous volume of the days of the Restoration which played so large a part in moulding the lives of English Churchmen in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a book too which was even to influence Charles Simeon. For the rather hard and cold teaching of the earlier book Venn tried to substitute something more in accordance with Evangelical truth. "Christ the Law-Giver", he says, "will always speak in vain, without Christ the Saviour is first known. All treatises to promote holiness must be deplorably defective, unless the Cross of Christ be laid as the foundation, constantly kept in view, and every duty enforced as having relation to the Redeemer."

Henry Venn's was a nature made up of many and various talents both of mind and of character. None of them was of the highest order, yet because all were concentrated upon one supreme object he was enabled to achieve results and to wield an influence which could scarcely have been foreseen. "The congruity of his intellectual powers was not marred by any discord in his affections, nor did either reason or passion ever abdicate or usurp in his mind the separate provinces over which they were respectively commissioned to reign. There prevailed throughout the whole man a certain symphony which enabled him to possess his soul in order, in energy, and in composure. And as, in all great social enterprises, the perfection of the success depends on the complete-

ness of the concert between the various co-operating agents, so in individual life, perfection can result only from the absolute accord, and the mutual support, of the various springs of action which animate the solitary agent. Those qualities which are antagonistic in most men were consentient in him; and his talents, though separately of no very exalted order, became, by their habitual concurrence, of very singular efficacy."¹

In addition to these whom Sir James Stephen has selected as the Fathers of the Movement, there were other great names of apostolic rank which merit more than a passing notice. No sketch of the rise of the Evangelical party would be in the least adequate which failed to give prominence to William Romaine, who for many years in almost solitary splendour represented the cause in London. It is a singular fact that, in spite of the strength of Methodism, no Evangelical was able to secure, with any certainty of being able to retain it, a pulpit in the metropolis.

Romaine, when he threw in his lot with the Evangelicals (1749), was afternoon lecturer at St. Dunstan's-in-the-West, the church in which Tyndale had boldly preached similar doctrines in earlier and even more stormy times. From the first his preaching aroused the resentment of the churchwardens, because it caused such large crowds to frequent the church that the parishioners were robbed of their seats. A change in the incumbency gave them the opportunity of initiating a series of small but annoying persecutions. First of all they revived an ancient but unenforced right by refusing to allow the lecturer to preach when the courts were not sitting. Then, in conjunction with the Vicar, they suddenly changed the hour of the lecture to seven in the evening, at the same time refusing to light or heat the church or to allow the congregation to enter it before the

¹ Sir James Stephen, *Essays in Eccles. Biog.*, vol. ii, pp. 165 f.

service began. Romaine, however, was not confounded, but held on his way in spite of all obstacles. Thus it came about that the only Evangelical service in any of the City churches was illuminated by a single taper which the preacher held in his hand, with the crowded worshippers sitting or standing around him. At last, after several years, the Bishop, scandalized by these notorious happenings, stepped in, and the churchwardens then made more suitable arrangements. But it was not until 1764 that Romaine, who had long been regarded as one of the foremost preachers of the day, was given preferment; and then it came, not from any ecclesiastical authority or private patron, but by the votes of the parishioners of St. Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe. Here he remained until his death in 1795, preaching twice a Sunday at St. Andrew's, but still retaining the evening lectureship at St. Dunstan's. Romaine was also the senior of Lady Huntingdon's chaplains, and held his own with that masterful lady until, with the other chaplains, he resigned his post on her passing over into Dissent.

In 1779 Newton had come to St. Mary Woolnoth, and one or two other Evangelicals had been presented to livings across the river; but for the most part the strength of the party lay in the proprietary chapels and lectureships to which they were appointed in increasing numbers. Foremost among the chaplains was Richard Cecil at St. John's, Bedford Row, "the most cultured and refined of all the Evangelical leaders", Balleine calls him; Basil Woodd at Bentinck Chapel; and a noble succession at the Lock Hospital. Amongst the lecturers were Romaine himself and, for a few years before his going to Huddersfield, Henry Venn.

When Venn went to Huddersfield in 1759 the Movement had already been begun in the North, and by the hands of a most unlikely agent, and at a spot equally unlikely. Some fifteen miles to the north-west of Huddersfield in the middle

of an expanse of heather-covered moors lay the desolate village of Haworth—it is known to literary England as the home of Patrick Brontë (1820–1861) and his family.¹ Long neglect, and, worse still, a clerical scandal, had allowed the village to lapse into almost complete paganism; even the dead were hurried into their graves without any religious ceremony. In the absence of religious belief strange superstitions held the villagers in terror, and weird rites were performed in order to propitiate a phantom dog—a kind of Hound of the Baskervilles—which was supposed to haunt the moors. The observance of Sunday was a thing unknown; some of the villagers went to the market at the neighbouring town of Bradford; the rest made it a holiday—the young men playing football on the moors. The whole tone of society can be imagined. Yet it was in this most unlikely place that the Revival first broke out in the North.

It came about through the agency of one of the most remarkable men who have ever donned a surplice. In his young days William Grimshaw had been a mighty hunter—though hardly “before the Lord”—and a skilled fisherman; not very unusual clerical accomplishments in their day. To a powerful body was added a will of equal strength, and even some sense of the fitness of things, for it is recorded that “he refrained as much as possible from gross swearing unless in suitable company, and, when he got drunk, would take care to sleep it out before he came home”.

Not long before he came to Haworth, in 1742, a number of influences had combined to effect a complete change in his life. The loss of a beloved wife, questions forced upon him by the spiritual needs of some of his flock, a chance perusal of Owen *On Justification*, had set his mind at work, and with earnestness and sincerity he had faced the problems of the

¹ There is a good description of Haworth and its neighbourhood in Mrs. Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë*.

soul. The actual change seems to have occurred suddenly, for it is related that Grimshaw was found one Sunday morning praying at five o'clock by his servant on going downstairs. During the day he fainted on more than one occasion, but spent every spare moment in prayer. After his second fainting attack, when he came to himself, "he seemed in a great rapture", and his first words were, "I have had a glorious vision from the third heaven". He went to church, began an afternoon service at two and continued it till seven.

Such was the man who came in God's providence to care for the spiritual needs of this wild uncivilized Yorkshire village. He proved himself to be equal to the task. Like Kingsley at Eversley, he could meet his parishioners on equal terms in any pursuit where strength of body and skill were required, and so he earned their respect.

He began by stopping the Sunday football, but after a time he found that the young people were spending their Sundays on the moors and engaging in all kinds of rough and undesirable horseplay. In order to catch them at such practices he disguised himself, rumour says, as an old woman, and suddenly appeared amongst them. "He took down all their names and ordered them to attend on him on a day and hour which he appointed. They all waited on him accordingly, as punctually as if they had been served with a warrant. After forming them into a circle and commanding them to kneel down, he prayed for them with much earnestness for a considerable time. After rising from his knees he gave them a close and affecting lecture. He never had occasion to repeat this friendly discipline. He entirely broke the objectionable custom."

After another great and prolonged struggle he also succeeded in stopping the Haworth races, which brought many undesirables to the village and were the occasion of disgraceful scenes. His care for the observance of the

Sabbath was not, however, limited to such a negative course as stopping Sunday games. He insisted on church attendance by all his parishioners, and his methods of obtaining it were probably as unique as they were certainly effective. Immediately before the sermon he would sally forth with a riding-crop in his hand and collect such of his flock as he had observed to be absent from their places in church. This custom had its humorous side. John Newton, in one of his letters, has the following description of it from the point of view of a stranger: "A friend of mine passing a public-house on a Lord's Day saw several persons jumping out of the windows and over a wall. He feared the house was on fire, but upon inquiring what was the cause of the commotion he was told that they saw the parson coming. They were more afraid of the parson than of a Justice of the Peace. His reproof was so authoritative, and yet so mild and friendly, that the stoutest sinner could not stand before him."

Grimshaw's preaching and manner of conducting the service were marked by deep earnestness and reality, and during the reading of the lessons he would turn any difficult sentence into broad Yorkshire. The results of his activity were seen in a crowded church. In 1757 the people at their own expense enlarged it, but even then it was not always big enough.

Both Wesley and Whitefield paid visits to Haworth and preached there. In 1757 Wesley records in his journal that on his way he was met by a fierce storm, "but this did not hinder such a congregation as the church could not contain. I suppose we had near a thousand communicants, and scarce a trifler among them. In the afternoon, the church not containing more than a third of the people, I was constrained to be in the churchyard". On one occasion Whitefield records that no less than thirty-five bottles of wine were consumed

in a single celebration of Holy Communion. In his preaching Whitefield always made a point of getting on the right side of his hearers; but at Haworth, when he began by saying smooth things to the congregation with this end in view, Grimshaw suddenly sprang up and interrupted him: "For God's sake do not speak so. I pray you do not flatter them. The greater part of them are going to Hell with their eyes open."

From the wilds of Yorkshire and the eccentricities of Mr. Grimshaw we must now pass to an almost equally rough village in the valley of the Severn and to one whose gentle character was in the strongest contrast to that of the Parson of Haworth—Fletcher of Madeley.

Fletcher of Madeley was born in Switzerland, and his name was originally Jean Guillaume de la Flechère, but on coming to England it was anglicized, for the benefit of his friends who found difficulties in pronouncing and spelling it, to John William Fletcher. He had been brought up at Geneva with the intention of entering the Calvinist ministry, but his gentle soul was so troubled by the doctrine of Election that he felt compelled to withdraw. In order to earn his living he became a private tutor and journeyed to England. The Methodist Movement was then at its height, and he was soon drawn to it by a natural sympathy. The occasion of his first hearing of the Methodists was almost casual. Mrs. Hill, the wife of his employer, struck by his religious earnestness, remarked in fun: "I shall wonder if our tutor does not turn Methodist by and by." "Methodist, Madam", said he, "pray what is that?" She replied, "Why; the Methodists are a people that do nothing but pray." "Then", said he, "by the help of God I will find them out."

Having found a faith which satisfied his intellectual as well as his spiritual needs, Fletcher felt his original intention of entering the ministry revive within him. He was not

even a naturalized Englishman, had no title for Orders, and no degree, but apparently in the laxity of the times such obstacles signified little. He was duly ordained deacon on March 6, 1757, by the Bishop of Hereford, and *only a week later* priest by the Bishop of Bangor.¹

He still retained his post as tutor to the Hills as long as his services were required, and when his pupils had grown too old, by the interest of Mr. Hill he was presented to the living of Madeley. Here he laboured for the rest of his days (1760-1785), and here he found fame, unsought and unexpected, but none the less real. Amidst the most unsuitable surroundings for one of his sensitive, delicate nature, and in spite of all offers of promotion, he insisted on remaining. Colliers, ironworkers, and small farmers—for of such his flock consisted—could little appreciate his intellectual gifts, and from the first resented his efforts to raise them from the rough and brutal life to which they were accustomed. They refused to come to church, saying that it was too early for them to wake up. "He provided for this also", wrote Wesley. "Taking a bell in his hand, he set out every Sunday at five in the morning, and went round the most distant parts of the parish, inviting all the inhabitants to the House of God." A spirit such as this could not be withstood indefinitely, and at last the little congregation began to grow so large that in time the churchyard as well as the church was filled, and a window near the pulpit had to be removed that all might hear the sermon.

Fletcher, like Newton, laboured hard during the week, holding services in outlying parts of his parish, as well as classes for instruction, and, in a word, adopting every device for the building up of his people. Like Grimshaw on the Yorkshire moors, he tracked down the young people en-

¹ The laxity of the times is surely some excuse for Wesley's various breaches of Church order.

gaged in wanton pastimes, and by sheer strength of will made them ashamed any longer to indulge in them. But fierce opposition broke out from almost every quarter. Some of the farmers refused to pay their tithes, a neighbouring squire threatened to thrash him publicly, and the colliers even arranged a bull-baiting, in which their Vicar was to take the part of the bull; fortunately their attempt to seize him was unsuccessful.

In spite of all the ingratitude of his parishioners and the solicitations of his friends to take up what seemed to them more important work, he stuck to his parish, and in the end he caught the illness of which he died through visiting a fever-stricken parishioner. His last thoughts were with his flock, and his lips murmured as their dying message, "O my poor! what will become of them?"

John Wesley had designated Fletcher as his successor in the Methodist Movement, but *deus aliter visum* and he himself was to outlive this younger friend and to write the moving story of his unselfish life. In a sermon preached at the time of Fletcher's death, he bore his noble and impartial testimony: "In four-score years I have known many exemplary men, holy in heart and life, but one equal to him I have not known, one so inwardly and outwardly devoted to God." "The saints, too, have their place in the house beautiful", a modern poet has told us, and amongst all the saints no name has a finer fragrance than that of Fletcher of Madeley.

"They have passed to their account", says Sir James Stephen, "these holy men of the eighteenth century; and it is neither without the appearance nor the consciousness of presumption that these attempts are made to discriminate between them, and to assign to each his appropriate claims to the gratitude of a later age. All such judgements must be more or less conjectural, resting on those slight and im-

perfect indications of character which can be discovered in their extant writings, or in the brief notices in which their contemporaries have celebrated them. But after every allowance shall have been made for these sources of error, enough will remain to convince any impartial inquirer that the first generation of the clergy designated as 'Evangelical' were the second founders of the Church of England."

CHAPTER III

THE SECOND GENERATION

THE closing years of the eighteenth century were marked by the outbreak of the French Revolution, an event which had quite serious consequences for religion in general and for the Evangelical Movement in particular. The struggle with France, which was a sequel to the Revolution, called forth the loyalty of the nation, and in part this loyalty took the form of an increased attachment to the National Church. Not a few of the Dissenters, moreover, held views which were much the same as those of the French revolutionaries, and some of them were not slow to proclaim them. This tended to widen the breach between Churchmen and Nonconformists. It was in these changed and changing circumstances that the second generation of Evangelicals found themselves, and they proved—higher praise could not be given them—not unworthy of their fathers.

One of the notes of the first generation of Evangelicals had been the "tradition of holy friendship . . . friends and friends' friends, walking in the house of God". This note was sounded on into the next generation—sounded, perhaps, with an even louder tone—and in the circle which Charles Simeon drew to him year after year in Cambridge, and in the community which gathered round "the villa-cinctured common of Clapham", men might have found a fresh illustration of the ancient saying, so often used in irony, "See how these Christians love one another".

The name of the Clapham Sect was invented, in a facetious

mood, by Sydney Smith (who also applied to its members and their fellow-Evangelicals the term "Patent Christianity"). It owes its preservation, and that as a title of honour and of fame, to Sir James Stephen's sketch in the *Edinburgh Review*, since republished as one of his *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*. Clapham, in the latter half of the eighteenth century, though already growing rapidly in population, was only a village, and still could gaze across three miles of fields to the metropolis, Cobbett's "monstrous wen", which was one day to engulf it. Moved by the pleasant situation and convenient distance from the City, a number of merchants and others had erected there a series of handsome villas. It chanced that nearly all of them had been drawn, by this means or that, under the influence of the Revival, and thus Clapham became a powerful centre of religious and philanthropic activity. Outwardly the Christian merchants of Clapham lived like other wealthy men of business; they had their horses and their carriages, and the dinners which they were so fond of giving to one another lacked no element of distinction or even of luxury. Inwardly, however, their lives were of the strictest, for like worthy successors of the original Methodists, they arranged each day to the last minute, and a stern self-discipline moulded and directed their conduct. They were indeed of the salt of the earth, and, as Bishop Moule has said, the "presence in England just then, in the formidable years before the fall of Napoleon, of such a body of strong, convinced Christian men, vigorous in thought, firm in faith, highly cultured, and versed in affairs, was itself a pledge and omen of mercy for the country and the Church".¹

The reputation of William Wilberforce has for the majority of mankind overshadowed, almost to obliteration, those of the other dwellers in this earthly paradise. None the

¹ *The Evangelical School*, etc., pp. 24 f.

less, his neighbours were men of renown and consideration in their own day, and several were the fathers of distinguished sons. Among them was Henry Thornton the banker, a monument of commercial integrity. This man, finding himself in his early days possessed of a fortune ample enough for all possible needs, "adjudged that it ought never to be increased by accumulation, nor diminished by sumptuousness". For years he spent upon himself less than one-eighth of his income, the rest was disbursed in deeds of charity. His most striking act was to undertake responsibility for the liabilities of an embarrassed concern simply because it had been represented that the firm was being backed by himself and his partners.

Others of the "sect" were Charles Grant, famous for his connexion with the East India Company; Zachary Macaulay, a notable man and the father of a still more notable son; John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth; and James Stephen, the father and grandfather of famous men.¹ To this little group and to his other parishioners ministered for

¹ The following inscription outside the Parish Church still commemorates them:—

LET US PRAISE GOD

For the memory and example of all the faithful departed who have worshipped in this church, and especially for the undernamed servants of Christ, sometime called

THE CLAPHAM SECT

who in the latter part of the 18th and early part of the 19th centuries laboured so abundantly for national righteousness and the conversion of the heathen, and rested not until the curse of slavery was swept away from all parts of the British Dominions.

CHARLES GRANT.

ZACHARY MACAULAY.

GRANVILLE SHARP.

JOHN SHORE, LORD TEIGN-
MOUTH.

JAMES STEPHEN.

HENRY THORNTON.

JOHN THORNTON.

HENRY VENN, Curate of Clapham.

JOHN VENN, Rector of Clapham.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

"Oh God, we have heard with our ears and our fathers have declared unto us the noble works that Thou didst in their days and in the old time before them."

some years the Rev. John Venn (1728-1813), a worthy son of a worthy father. He had his father's sound common sense, and, unlike many Evangelicals, he had a talent for building up in the religious life as well as for laying the first foundations. To him succeeded in due course William Dealtry, who also exhibited like virtues of "learning, earnestness, and wise moderation".

Wilberforce himself was the son of wealthy parents, a man of splendid gifts and of an unusually attractive personality. The great change which he underwent in 1784 came about almost by chance. He had invited Isaac Milner to accompany him on a trip to the Continent, and as they slowly drove along the snow-bound roads on their return journey Milner suggested that they should read Doddridge on *The Rise and Progress of Religion*, a book which Wilberforce had picked up. A second journey to the Continent in company with the same friend further influenced Wilberforce, and at last he accepted the Evangelical doctrines, though, as he himself confessed, "they long remained merely as opinions assented to by my understanding but not influencing my heart". With the new doctrines came a new desire to devote all his great talents of person and opportunity to the furtherance of some great cause. As all the world knows, he found that cause in the campaign against slavery.¹ The great triumph of his life came when in 1807 the Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was passed by Parliament after a long and varied struggle. Wilberforce just lived long enough to know that the success of the crowning work of abolishing slavery itself in the Empire was assured. The Bill was passed on July 25, 1833. Thus was completed what Lecky has called "one of the three or four perfectly virtuous acts recorded in the history of nations".

¹ The story of this campaign and of Wilberforce's life has recently been told afresh by Professor Coupland.

This final stage of the struggle was carried on mainly by Thomas Fowell Buxton (1786-1845), one of the world's great men, who gained his influence, not through the possession of outstanding gifts, but by sheer determination and force of character. He was unwearied and resolute in all good works. Before the mantle of Wilberforce fell upon him he had already done noble service as his helper.

The other great centre of Evangelicalism was at Cambridge. In the home of Methodism the notorious St. Edmund's Hall case had shown that the colleges and University of Oxford did not want Methodists or any who shared their peculiar doctrines. Hence the Evangelicals sent their young men to the sister University. The predominant figure there in the earlier years was Isaac Milner, the younger brother of Joseph, who has been already mentioned in connexion with Wilberforce. He was a man of humble birth, but possessed of an exceedingly strong will and intellectual gifts of a very high order. In the Mathematical Tripos he was so far ahead of all his rivals that the examiners added *Incomparabilis* to his name. When in 1788 he was made President of Queens' College immediately he made it a great home for Evangelicals. Isaac Milner was a kind of Evangelical Dr. Johnson, a great conversationalist, gruff and harsh, clumsy in figure and rather unapproachable, but kind-hearted. Queens', however, was not the only college to which Evangelicals were drawn; many also went to Magdalene, which has been described as "the general resort of young men seriously impressed with a sense of religion".¹ Here Farish was tutor, an office which he combined or varied with that of Vicar of St. Giles and the Professorship of Chemistry. He was in a fuller sense even than Milner the guide, philosopher, and friend of numberless young gownsmen.

¹ *The Memories of the Rev. Thomas Dykes*, p. 6.

The most famous of all the Evangelical leaders in Cambridge, however, was Charles Simeon, one of the greatest names in the Church of England. The work which he did for the Church has seldom been fully recognized. He had not about him that wistful air which drew men to follow John Henry Newman, nor is his career such as to excite romantic admiration, but there is little doubt that Bishop Charles Wordsworth was right when he asserted that Simeon's was a more powerful influence even than Newman's when judged merely by the number of young men whom he attracted to himself.¹

Simeon was a strong and definite Churchman, and to his influence diffused throughout the length and breadth of the land by means of his Cambridge pupils, the rapid spread of many of the doctrines emphasized by the Oxford Tractarians can be in part attributed. His Churchmanship was a stumbling-block to some of the narrowly pious: "Mr. Simeon is more of a Churchman than a Gospelman", they would say.

As a young man he had certain peculiarities, amongst them a strictness in dress and manners which even that age found a little irksome. To the end of his life he was sometimes a trifle irritable and liable to be offended by small breaches of good manners. That his name should have been given to Evangelicals in Cambridge as a term of reproach—they were nicknamed "Sims"—was an unfortunate accident brought about by the exaggerations of his pupils and followers, and that in spite of his own efforts to keep them sober-minded and sane. "Pray study to maintain peace", he would say to them, "though you make some sacrifice for it."

Simeon was born at Reading in the same year (1759) as

¹ Quoted by Overton, *The English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 54, note 2.

Wilberforce, and spent his schooldays at Eton, where he had the reputation of being a good horseman and a boy of great bodily activity. On going to King's College, Cambridge, in 1779 he found that by the rules he had to make his Communion. A sudden realization of his own unworthiness filled him with boundless uneasiness, and for a time he was almost frantic with despair. He found help and guidance, not from volumes current amongst Evangelicals, but from a High-Church manual, *The Whole Duty of Man*, and from Bishop Wilson *On the Lord's Supper*. By God's grace he found rest and peace for his soul. The whole of his subsequent life was spent in pastoral ministrations at Holy Trinity Church and in his college and University duties. These last gave him opportunities, which he used to the full, of gaining the confidence of young men, and especially of ordinands. Macaulay, who went up to Cambridge in 1818, wrote of Simeon: "If you knew what his authority and influence were and how they extended from Cambridge to the most remote corners of England, you would allow that his real sway over the Church was far greater than that of any primate."¹

Amongst his friends and pupils were men destined to be pioneers in the cause of Missions overseas; men like Thomason, Buchanan, and above all Henry Martyn, the scholar saint, "whom grateful England still loves".²

Henry Martyn was born at Truro early in 1781, just ten years before the death of John Wesley, and a few months before his own beloved master began his long ministry at Holy Trinity, Cambridge. His father had begun life as a miner, but by sheer force of character had raised himself to

¹ *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*, vol. i, p. 67.

² The latest study of the life of Henry Martyn is by Miss C. E. Padwick. His journals can still be picked up second-hand, and, although a trifle melancholy in tone, give amazing insight into the thought and life of the times.

a position which enabled him to give his children, such of them that is as survived childhood, for they were a delicate lot, a respectable education.

Henry went to the Grammar School of his native town, and there seems to have been an idle boy with a fierce temper. He came up to St. John's College, Cambridge, almost entirely ignorant of mathematics. Ambition, however, awoke in him, and by strenuous effort he was able to attain to the honour of being Senior Wrangler besides gaining the First Smith's Prize. Such a brilliant record had its natural sequel when in 1802 his college made him a Fellow. But these earthly prizes, although fully appreciated by Henry Martyn, were not the rewards for which he was now striving. As an undergraduate his religion had been merely nominal, and often enough he did not trouble to say his prayers. The sudden death of his father was a blow that made reflection a necessity for one of his temperament, and the earnest prayers of a devoted sister turned his mind to religious things. His life was changed and the current of his ambitions turned into an entirely new channel. Looking back on this event he afterwards wrote: "The work is real. I can no more doubt it than I can my own existence. The whole content of my desires is altered, I am walking quite another way, though I am incessantly stumbling in that way."

After a time of great usefulness in Cambridge, he sailed for India in 1805 to become a Chaplain in the service of the East India Company. On landing, his sensitive soul was horrified by the heathenism around him, and he "shuddered as if in the dominions of the prince of darkness". As a Chaplain he had much to do in the way of attending on Europeans of all ages and classes, and so had but little time for non-Christians. But at Cawnpore, when the hereditary disease which was to bring his life to a speedy close had

already begun to appear, he preached to them for the first time. He had, however, laboured much over translations, and had actually finished the New Testament in both Hindustani and Persian. When told that the latter version was too idiomatic, he determined to proceed to Persia itself to improve it, and on the first opportunity went thither.

He settled at Shiraz, a seat of learning, and spent much time and energy in public disputations with Moslem scholars. During his time there he translated the whole of the New Testament afresh into Persian, and made arrangements for it to be presented to the King. Then his thoughts turned homewards, and in spite of his being only just recovered from a violent attack of fever, he set out on the long journey to Constantinople. The fever, however, returned, and the weary saint of God found release from many sufferings and weaknesses at the little town of Tocat in Asia Minor (October 16, 1812).

The last entry in his journal is a pathetic aspiration after that state of peace and of purity into which he was soon to enter. "No horses being to be had, I had an unexpected repose. I sat in the orchard, and thought, with sweet comfort and peace, of my God; in solitude my company, my friend and comforter. Oh, when shall time give place to eternity! When shall appear that new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness! There, there shall in nowise enter in anything that defileth: none of that wickedness which has made men worse than wild beasts—none of those corruptions which add still more to the miseries of mortality, shall be seen or heard of any more."

The life of Henry Martyn was in outward seeming a failure, a striking example of great powers wasted through an impractical idealism. But in actual fact his name has, from the time of his death becoming known in England, been an inspiration and a challenge, and the appeal of his

life of entire devotion has not yet lost its potency. Lewis Morris has well described its echoing message:—

There came another of priestly garb and mien,
A young man wanting still the years of Christ,
But long since with the saints . . .
A poet with the contemplative gaze
And listening ear, but quick of force and eye,
Who fought the wrong without, the wrong within,
And being a pure saint, like those of old,
Abased himself and all the precious gifts
God gave him, flinging all before the feet
Of Him whose name he bore—a fragile form
Upon whose hectic cheek there burned a flush
That was not health; who lived as Xavier lived,
And died like him upon the burning sands
. . . whom grateful England still loves.

Although Evangelicals, as we have said, were not encouraged in Oxford in the late eighteenth century, it was not left without witnesses. The names of Daniel Wilson of St. Edmund's Hall and Josiah Pratt readily occur. Daniel Wilson succeeded the famous Richard Cecil at St. John's, Bedford Row, in 1810, and was subsequently Vicar of Islington and Bishop of Calcutta. Josiah Pratt, to whom Evangelicalism owes, humanly speaking, the allegiance of Fowell Buxton, was one of the founders of the Bible Society and also of the Church Missionary Society, of which latter Society he acted as Secretary for many years. He was a man of broad views, and even persuaded the C.M.S. to make grants to Bishop's College, Calcutta.

CHAPTER IV

THE MIDDLE YEARS

THE Evangelical Movement was perhaps at its purest at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Certainly the general awakening of the whole Church of England was due very largely to the Evangelicals, who in zeal and diligence far surpassed the members of all other schools. "The deepest and most fervid religion in England", wrote Liddon, "during the first three decades of this century was that of the Evangelicals." It seems certain that their influence in the Church and country was very considerable and much greater than can be accounted for by their numbers or by the positions of ecclesiastical importance which were held by members of the party. Such was their power, especially amongst the wealthy, that religion had become almost "the thing", and in consequence many pressed in who had no real sincerity of belief, members of "that ungracious crew that feigns demurest grace". Hypocrisy was an easy matter, for the Evangelical theology, since it consisted of but a few cardinal doctrines upon which the rest turned, was, for the superficial, simple of acquirement. The correct phrases, few in number, though far-reaching in depth, which to an earlier generation had been a means of conveying real experiences, had become a convention, almost a shibboleth, and, like all shibboleths, were capable of being imitated by the indolent and hypocritical; whilst by their exalted demands they repelled not a few of the more earnest and devout.

It was some time, however, before any definite Evan-

gelical was found amongst the Bishops; the first to attain the distinction being Henry Ryder, consecrated to Gloucester in 1815. The next Bishop was Charles Sumner, consecrated to Llandaff in 1826, but translated to Winchester in the following year. During his long episcopate of forty-two years he reorganized his vast diocese and set an entirely new standard of episcopal activity. His brother, John Bird Sumner, became Bishop of Chester in 1828, and displayed a like energy and ability. On one occasion, finding that many of the congregation were standing in the passages whilst a number of pews were empty, he stopped the service to inquire why they were not occupied. "The pews are private property", he was told, "and the owners have shut them up." "There can be no such thing", he said, "in the House of God. Send for a blacksmith to take off the locks. We will sing a hymn while he does it." In 1848 he became Archbishop of Canterbury, where his simple manner of life was almost a scandal to the old-fashioned type of Church and State Evangelical. Refusing to drive in his state coach with outriders and armed guards, he would walk about with an umbrella under his arm. When complaints were made of his want of dignity, he met them by saying, "I cannot imagine that any greater reproach could be cast on the Church than to suppose that it allowed its dignity to interfere with its usefulness." Later there came Pelham at Norwich, Waldegrave at Carlisle, and Baring at Durham. Bishop Creighton in his article in the *Dictionary of National Biography* has testified to the good work which was done by the latter (under whom he served when Vicar of Embleton), although he felt that the Bishop did not trust his clergy sufficiently, even allowing the office of Rural Dean to lapse in some cases.

The Evangelical faith made great headway from the first at inland watering-places like Cheltenham, Bath, and

Tunbridge Wells. In this period Francis Close, who afterwards became Dean of Carlisle, ruled Cheltenham with almost despotic power, whilst at Tunbridge Wells Edward Hoare carried on the godly succession. At Brighton also the saintly Henry Venn Elliott exhibited some of the characteristics of his grandfather, Henry Venn.

But in other, and perhaps more difficult, spheres Evangelicalism was exhibiting its power in the slums of London, and in the great cities its preachers were proving amazingly successful. Foremost among these was William Champneys, afterwards Dean of Lichfield, who went to Whitechapel in 1837. If Charles Sumner was the first of the modern type of Bishop, Champneys was the pioneer of the modern type of town parson. Whitechapel was at this time sunk in the lowest state; vice and crime were rampant. The Church life of the place was non-existent; one service on Sunday morning at which none of the parishioners were present had been the extent of its provision for the spiritual needs of the inhabitants. Champneys tackled his difficult problem with great energy and courage, and fortunately he had not to tackle it single-handed. Ten years before he went to Whitechapel the Church Pastoral Aid Society had begun its magnificent work as a home missionary agency—it is interesting to know that Pusey subscribed £100 to it, but withdrew his support when lay-agents were employed—and by the aid of the society he was able to obtain an active body of colleagues. So successful was the work when once the effects of years of neglect had been overcome that in 1851 there were present over 1,500 in the morning, over 800 in the afternoon, and more than 1,600 at night. Churches and schools were built and various experiments made in organizations. These are now common in every active parish; but Whitechapel under Champneys showed the way.

In the growing towns of the Midlands and the North

Evangelicals were well represented. Among the more prominent were Hugh McNeile in Liverpool, J. C. Miller in Birmingham, Hugh Stowell in Salford, Atkinson at Leeds, and Robinson in Leicester.

The early years of the nineteenth century were years of reviving life in the Church of England, and for this reviving life the Evangelicals, both directly by their own activities and indirectly by the example which they set to other schools of thought, were in the main responsible. But a new movement was soon to arise, a revival of the party which in some obscurity had held fast to the conception of the Church which had been characteristic of the great Caroline divines. To tell the story of the rise of the Oxford Movement in any detail is not possible here, but since it very materially affected the development of Evangelicalism, some slight account must be given.

Newman always dated the beginning of the Movement from Keble's assize sermon on July 14, 1833, under the title of *National Apostasy*. Keble had been inspired to utter his warning by the threatening attitude of the Government, who had just suppressed ten Irish sees and were turning their eyes to the Church of England. Newman himself was an Evangelical by early training; he readily admitted that he "almost owed his soul" to Thomas Scott, that it was from Joseph Milner's *Church History* that he had obtained his first knowledge of the writings of the Fathers, and even that the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration had come to him from the study of a work by Archbishop Sumner. For a time Newman was under the influence of the acute minds of the Oriel common-room of which he was a member; more or less unconsciously their Liberal views began to possess him, until he awoke with a start to the direction in which he seemed to be drifting. To Newman the Oxford Movement was primarily a reaction against Liberalism.

Newman's first contact with the Movement, or rather with those who were quietly preparing for it, came about through Hurrell Froude, a pupil of Keble. Hurrell Froude was a man of great gifts, but his zeal often outran his discretion, and it will always be a moot point whether he would have lapsed into Romanism if an early death had not cut short his brilliant but erratic course.

To the greater part of the leaders the Oxford Movement was a rallying to the defence of the Church against the aggressions of the State; it was equally at least an attempt to revive doctrines which were part of the Church's heritage, but obscured and neglected in its actual life and teaching. Such doctrines were to them nothing novel, for they claimed to have learned them from the lips of their parents. As the Movement developed, however, souls more ardent and reckless than Keble and Pusey were drawn in, and brought with them doctrines which were much more akin to Roman accretions on the Catholic Faith than to the teaching of the great Caroline divines. The glamour of the Mother Church of Western Christendom blinded their eyes to the humble virtues of the Church of their baptism, and even, one is afraid, to the claims of loyalty and common honesty. Two of the more advanced of these wilder spirits wrote to the *Univers* in April 1841: "We love with unfeigning affection the Apostolic See. We are destined to bring many wandering sheep back to the knowledge of the truth. Let us remain quiet for some years, till by God's blessing the ears of Englishmen become accustomed to hear the name of Rome pronounced with reverence." Another of the same school, the somewhat amusing W. G. Ward, "felt bound to retain his external communion with the English Church because he believed that he was bringing many of its members towards Rome, and to unite himself with the Church which he loved, if by so doing he thwarted

the larger and fuller victory of the truth, seemed a course both indefensible and selfish".¹

Newman was greatly influenced by these younger men, although, at the command of his Bishop, he did his best to restrain them. It was partly in order to induce them to remain loyal to the Church of England that his famous Tract XC was written in 1840. In this Tract he tried to show that the Thirty-nine Articles were "patient of a Catholic interpretation", and in his endeavour he was probably much nearer the truth than either he or his opponents imagined.

The publication of Tract XC, however, raised a tremendous outcry. But the leaders of the opposition were not Evangelicals, but Broad Churchmen like Arnold and Tait, the future Archbishop, or old-fashioned High Churchmen like C. P. Golightly. Low Churchmen, too, as distinct from Evangelicals, were also well to the fore. The distinction between these bodies is so important that it requires a short digression.

In the eighteenth century the term Low Churchman had mainly a political significance, being the ecclesiastical equivalent of Whig. In doctrine the Low Churchmen were Latitudinarian, and in the conduct of their parishes amongst the worst offenders. "The clergy who only gave their flock a service once a fortnight, the clergy whose churches were falling to pieces through dirt and dampness and decay, the fashionable, card-playing clergy of the towns, the port-loving, fox-hunting squarsons of the villages were all Low Churchmen to a man, but some of them would have used very strong language if they had been called Evangelicals. Indeed, the whole Evangelical Movement had been a protest and a struggle against the Low Church system, and the Low Churchmen had been the bitterest opponents of

¹ *W. G. Ward and the Oxford Movement*, p. 356.

the Evangelicals. But they hated Popery even more than prayer-meetings, and they turned aside from persecuting "the nasty and numerous vermin of Methodism" to exterminate "the pragmatistical perpendicular, Puseyite prigs". The language is that of Sydney Smith, their chief spokesman in the Press. But gradually, as the struggle against Tractarian influences became more acute, the greater energy and importance of the Evangelicals made them take the leading part, and after a time the Low Churchmen were absorbed into their ranks. Further, the rise of the Oxford Movement and the emphasis which its devotees placed upon certain doctrines led many Evangelicals, who were really convinced Churchmen, first to refrain from teaching such doctrines because they might be misunderstood and then gradually to abandon them because so easily capable of perversion. The greater part of the Evangelicals did thus actually become Low Churchmen.

The Oxford Movement, therefore, had an evil effect on Evangelicalism because it tended to bring out what unfortunately is always latent in the members of the school, an eagerness to judge others and a spirit of suspicion. The Evangelical message lost much of its positive force, and its exponents often "forgot that their tradition was based upon the preaching of the positive Evangel of Christ's dying love for souls. Their preaching often became a panic anti-Roman proclamation, witnessed to by a form of service from which dignity and beauty were rigorously excluded".¹

In the earliest years the position of the Evangelicals and of the Tractarians was not so utterly dissimilar as is often supposed; the difference was much more one of emphasis than of disagreement. Indeed, the great bulk of Evangelical teaching was accepted by the Tractarians; they felt, how-

¹ H. A. Wilson in *Liberal Evangelicalism*, p. 25.

ever, that it was inadequate and needed supplementing. The following judgement of Liddon represents their standpoint and is valuable for its warnings. "The Evangelical Movement", he says, "partly in virtue of its very intensity, was, in respect of its advocacy of religious truth, an imperfect and one-sided movement. It laid stress only on such doctrines of Divine Revelation as appeared to its promoters to be calculated to produce a converting or sanctifying effect upon the souls of men. Its interpretation of the New Testament—little as its leaders ever suspected this—was guided by a traditional assumption as arbitrary and as groundless as any tradition which it ever denounced. The real sources of its 'Gospel' were limited to a few chapters of St. Paul's Epistles . . . understood in a manner which left much else in Holy Scripture out of account; and thus the Old Testament history, and even the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, as recorded by the Evangelists, were thrown comparatively into the background. The needs and salvation of the believer, rather than the whole revealed Will in Whom we believe, was the governing consideration. As a consequence, those entire departments of the Christian revelation which deal with the corporate union of Christians with Christ in His Church and with the Sacraments, which by His appointment are the channels of His grace to the end of time, were not so much forgotten as unrecognized."¹

¹ *Life of E. B. Pusey*, vol. i, pp. 255 f. With this judgement of Liddon on the Evangelicals may be compared that of Bishop Moule on the Tractarians themselves. "I for one cannot think that the memorable Oxford group of the thirties consciously combined to prepare a complete counter-Reformation, though certainly one of them, Hurrell Froude, avowed a harsh and narrow animosity against the Reformers. To many of them, assuredly, a vision of the Church was present in which the best elements of patristic, medieval, and English theology appeared blended in a golden haze. Nevertheless, I cannot but maintain that their theory of the Body of Christ, and of the way of salvation, was not so much a development as a really new thing in the main stream of our post-Reformation

The Oxford Movement, from one aspect, was an expression of the desire, firmly implanted in mankind, for co-operation and association. This same desire had already exhibited itself amongst Evangelicals in the formation of societies. In the period now under review these societies found a notable patron and advocate in Anthony, Lord Ashley, afterwards the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury.

As a schoolboy the realization of his responsibility for others had been aroused in his mind, as an inscription at Harrow still bears record, by the sight of a pauper funeral. He was a worthy successor to Wilberforce, and like Wilberforce he dedicated to the service of God and his fellow-men the numerous talents which he possessed, both those which were personal and those which came to him from his high birth and influential connexions. Outwardly cold in manner, and somewhat forbidding in his austerity, his heart was filled with a constraining passion to save both the bodies and souls of all in need. The long list of beneficent Acts of Parliament, beginning with the Ten-Hours Bill of 1847, was the fruit of but a small portion of his labours. His public activities in Parliament were supplemented by unceasing efforts in private; the innumerable charitable and philanthropic societies over which he presided or to which he lent the support of his powerful influence witness to these. He was a keen sympathizer with all attempts to reach those who were untouched by the usual methods of the Church, and newer methods, such as the holding of evangelistic services in theatres, were welcomed by him. His relationship to Lord Palmerston enabled him to perform a useful office to the Church, and to bring into prominent positions men who might otherwise have been passed over. When

theology. Certainly their teaching on the vital necessity of Episcopacy, on Justification, on Regeneration, and on the nature of the Eucharistic presence, was not that of Hall, nor even of Andrews and Laud, nor of Beveridge" (*The Evangelical School*, etc., pp. 28 f.).

Palmerston became Prime Minister in 1855 he made a point of consulting Shaftesbury in the exercise of his ecclesiastical patronage.¹ At one time it was slanderously and ignorantly affirmed that the power which Shaftesbury thus acquired was used for party ends, and that in consequence men inferior both in learning and talents were thrust upon the Church as its leaders. That such was not the case can be seen by glancing down a list of Palmerston's appointments. "Longley, Tait, Thomson, Ellicott, Browne, Trench, Alford, Jeremie, were not members of the Evangelical school. Baring, Waldegrave, and Jeune were men of eminent distinction at Oxford."

To the day of his death Shaftesbury laboured at his great tasks, and even in passing to another world his thoughts were still turned to this with a consciousness of all that was left undone: "I cannot bear to leave the world with all the misery in it."

In these philanthropic efforts and in the work of many of the great societies, Churchmen and Dissenters worked amicably side by side, sinking their differences in the desire to co-operate for the furtherance of the Kingdom. But a breach was gradually growing between them. This breach, in so far as it was the result of political considerations, for so in part it was, had first arisen at the time of the French Revolution, when many Dissenters had eagerly embraced revolutionary opinions. It was made wider by numbers of smaller events in the ecclesiastical sphere. St. Bartholomew's Day 1862 was kept by the Dissenters as the bi-centenary of the expulsion of Richard Baxter and other divines from the cures into which they had been intruded during the Commonwealth period, and considerable feeling was aroused

¹ The appointment of Bishops was one of the most trying of the duties attached to the office of Prime Minister, at least so Lord Melbourne found it: "I positively believe they die to vex me", he once affirmed.

amongst many Churchmen by the manner in which the celebrations were conducted. In this feeling the Evangelicals were at one with the High Churchmen. A few years later, in spite of the Gorham judgement allowing the Evangelical interpretation of the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration, the great Baptist preacher C. H. Spurgeon suddenly attacked the Evangelicals and accused them of perjury in subscribing to the Prayer Book, which clearly taught the doctrine.

The disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of Ireland in 1869 was thought to be but a prelude to a similar dealing with the Church of England, and the Non-conformists were very aggressive and triumphant. Finally, many Dissenters, following the lead of the Birmingham Education League, desired to banish all religion and even the reading of the Bible from the schools of the country. With such attacks on the Church and on the teaching of all religion the Evangelicals were entirely out of sympathy, and for some years the feelings between them and those who would have co-operated with them so readily were too acute to allow of such a beneficent course.

The middle years of the century were further characterized by the growth of another influence, and that an influence which for a time seemed to threaten the Evangelical cause, depending as it does on the authority of Scripture, with grievous injury. Earlier in the century the publication of Lyell's *Principles of Geology* had occasioned much perturbation amongst the orthodox, but those who proclaimed the new ideas in Geology made strenuous efforts to reconcile their teaching—an impossible and as we now see unnecessary labour—with the book of Genesis.¹ The translation of Strauss's *Life of Christ* and other similar

¹ Nowadays people make similar efforts in trying to reconcile Genesis with Geology.

works added to the confusion. Much of the unsettlement of the time finds an echo in *In Memoriam*, which, though it exhausted no problems, yet "intimated many of the deepest of them, and lent the voice of pathetic music and exquisite human feeling to the widening doubts, misgivings, and flat incredulities of the time".¹ Then in 1858 the volume entitled *Essays and Reviews* was published. What made this volume so notable was the fact that it was the work of clergymen of the Church of England, and to the minds of many it seemed to be an act of deliberate treachery on their part. Much of the contents of the volume has now become mere commonplace, but to the Churchpeople of the sixties it was dangerous innovation. The alarm aroused by *Essays and Reviews* became almost a panic when Bishop Colenso in the following years published his work on the Pentateuch. It is hard for us to realize the state of feeling sixty years ago. The amazing advances in Natural Science had filled the minds of many with the conviction that a new age was about to dawn; that man was, by his unaided powers, about to triumph over all obstacles to happiness and progress; as for God and religion, there would no longer be any need for them. Churchmen who in any way accepted the new teaching and tried to proclaim it were naturally suspected, and men like Jowett and Stanley, who by personal intercourse and public teaching were helping to popularize the new ideas, were regarded with horror.² The times have been described as the "very flood-tide of materialism and Agnosticism—the mechanical theory of the Universe, the reduction of all spiritual facts to physiological phenomena"³ being accepted as proved.

¹ Morley, *Recollections*, vol. i, pp. 14 f.

² Even books like Conybeare and Howson, *Life and Letters of St. Paul*, and Pusey's *Daniel*, were regarded with suspicion.

³ Myers in *Life of Bishop Moule*, p. 34.

In face of this flood of new knowledge—much of which was to prove itself acceptable to man's conception of truth and even to commend itself to his conscience as a new revelation of God—the Evangelicals were for the time helpless. The rigid, narrowly defined channels along which their system flowed proved quite incapable of receiving the incoming waters. To other schools of thought was left the attempt either to defend the faith against what was unworthy or misleading or to draw out what was beneficial and to incorporate it into Christianity.

One thing, however, the Evangelicals did. They founded new theological colleges to give to their ordination candidates a fuller and more complete training, so as to enable them to face the troublous times with a better equipment and a more informed hope. In 1863 the London College of Divinity (St. John's Hall, Highbury) was opened, having as its principal T. P. Boulton. Some years later Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, was founded (1877), and finally Ridley Hall, Cambridge, in 1881, under H. C. G. Moule. The objects for which the latter institution was founded—and they apply equally well to the other two—were: (a) To set forth the sound Scriptural and Theological foundations of the Evangelical faith and practice of the Church of England as seen in the Prayer Book and Articles; (b) to combat Rationalistic propaganda.¹

One regrettable feature of this period—it survived into the next period also—was the attempt, frequently renewed, to enforce religious uniformity within the Church by means of appeals to the secular courts. Prosecutions for breaches of orthodoxy, real or supposed, were the beginning, to be followed in due season by efforts, equally unsuccessful, to check the spread of ritualistic experiments. One very famous

¹ The publication of *Supernatural Religion* in 1872 was a special cause of the founding of the two Halls at the Universities.

case was that connected with a certain Mr. Gorham, an Evangelical clergyman, who was refused institution to the living of Brampford Speke by Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter as being unsound in the faith. The question in dispute was the meaning of Baptismal Regeneration. Gorham was a learned and subtle disputant, but probably too nice in his definitions, and the Court of Arches upheld the Bishop. An appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council followed. Here the Evangelicals relied, and relied successfully, on the great learning and sane judgement of William Goode. They were able to prove that the views which they held were also those of great teachers of the Church like Jewell, Ussher, Hooker, and Jeremy Taylor. In March 1850 the previous judgement was reversed, and Mr. Gorham's right to institution upheld. This decision had far-reaching consequences, as it was the signal for a number of men to secede to Rome, and amongst them two Archdeacons, Manning and Wilberforce. Another strange sequel was the admission of J. B. Mozley, one of the greatest of the Tractarians, that the Evangelicals were entirely justified in holding this position.¹ The Bishop of Exeter still refused to institute and even threatened excommunication to the Archbishop of Canterbury. The terms of the threat are sufficiently interesting to be reproduced: "We, Henry, Bishop of Exeter, do solemnly protest and declare, that any Archbishop, who shall institute Charles Cornelius Gorham to the cure and government of souls, will thereby incur the Sin of supporting and favouring heretical doctrines, and we do hereby renounce and repudiate all communion with anyone, be he who he may, who shall so institute the said Charles Cornelius Gorham."

The next important prosecution was that of two of the contributors to *Essays and Reviews*, Rowland Williams and

¹ See J. B. Mozley, *Review of the Baptismal Controversy*.

H. B. Wilson. In the former case Bishop Hamilton of Salisbury, an Evangelical by early training, was the prosecutor. In each case the prosecution failed on appeal: the Court of Arches condemning the essayists for denying the inspiration of Scripture and the eternity of punishment, but the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council acquitting them. The failure of these prosecutions was a happy event from almost every point of view, since the effort to foreclose discussion by legal means is always a mistake, and a successful prosecution might have encouraged further attempts against less obvious offenders.

The other prosecutions were undertaken in the vain endeavour to limit ritualistic excesses. The Oxford Movement had owed not a little to the romantic revival in literature and art, and it was natural that in its efforts to revive neglected doctrine it should make use of ritualistic acts and vestments as symbols of theological truths.¹ The desire also to emphasize the continuity of the Church of England made it expedient to demonstrate that continuity by copying the services and ritual of the medieval Church. Pusey himself and the early leaders had no sympathy with such antiquarian motives, and in particular always deprecated the revival of disused vestments. To the end of his Anglican career Newman celebrated facing south, the position adopted by Pusey himself until quite late in life.²

About the year 1850, however, some of the younger Tractarians introduced all kinds of forgotten practices, to the great scandal of their parishioners. At St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, and at St. Barnabas', Pimlico, there were disgraceful riots. Much of the violence and unruliness was

¹ The romantic movement in English literature was really a reaction from foreign standards of taste; the religious movement which it fostered very soon allowed itself to come under the power of foreign influences.

² See Liddon, *Life of E. B. Pusey*, vol. iv, p. 211.

due to the excited state of feeling in the country—a state of feeling which now seems almost unintelligible—over the Pope's act in dividing England into a number of Roman Catholic dioceses. The mob saw in the mild ritualism of the Tractarians further instances of papal aggression.

For some time no official steps were taken to stop the innovations, and when attempts at prosecution arose they were not directed against ritual innovations. The Tractarians had become very aggressive after the founding of the English Church Union in 1859. Such harmless practices as holding mission services in theatres were obnoxious to them, and they even tried to bring a case of heresy against Bishop Waldegrave of Carlisle. Finding itself powerless in such matters, the E.C.U. tried to get legislation in 1862 by which the bringing of priests to trial for heresy and breaches of Church discipline might be facilitated. It is very important to remember that the first attempts to invoke the aid of Cæsar were not made by Evangelicals, but by Tractarians. To counteract the aggression of the E.C.U. the Evangelicals in 1865 formed the Church Association, and a series of prosecutions soon followed. The object of many of these cases was simply to discover the state of the law, whether certain practices were legal or not, a subject upon which there was much uncertainty. In 1874 Tait, who had behind him the whole episcopate, brought in the Public Worship Regulation Bill. The Bill was not intended to deal with matters in dispute, but to hasten the processes by which they might be settled. A large number of prosecutions of leading ritualists followed during the next few years, in four cases imprisonment being the result. The most notorious case was that of Mr. Green of Miles Platting, who remained in Lancaster Gaol for nearly two years. The result of these prosecutions was disastrous for those who initiated them. Of the last Stock says: "Probably no one event in the

history of the past half-century has done so much to foster the Romanizing movement, and to injure the Evangelical cause, as the imprisonment of Mr. Green.”¹

The system of prosecutions was certainly unwise, and caused public sympathy to go over to the ritualists. In 1883 the Islington Conference protested against “the disastrous policy of attempting to stay error by prosecution and imprisonment”. The last of the prosecutions was the trial of the saintly Bishop King in 1889, and ended in the famous Lincoln Judgement. Henceforward the Evangelicals adopted the line of witnessing to the truth of their doctrines by trying to make their parishes as efficient as possible. This course was suggested by the Rev. A. J. Robinson, Rector of Holy Trinity, Marylebone, in a letter to the *Record* of August 12, 1892. The comments of the editor on the proposal are worthy of being repeated. “The wise course lies plainly before us. It is by doing good, rather than preventing evil, that the Evangelical body exert a real influence in the Church. The repression of illegal practices is the duty of the authorities; their responsibility will be more readily recognized and more easily discharged when it is not attempted to be shared by volunteers. But, on the other hand, Evangelical work is heaped up around us waiting to be done. It would be a satisfactory and logical result of the Judgement if the C.P.A.S. were to find its resources suddenly reinforced.”

This period in the history of Evangelicalism cannot be left without touching upon a series of movements which gave to it one of its most characteristic features, the series of movements commonly called revivals. The first of these began as a consequence of a small prayer meeting held in New York in 1858. During the course of the next few years this revival spread over the whole of the United States,

¹ *History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. iii, p. 6.

and wherever it went the most remarkable achievements marked its course. In 1859 the revival suddenly crossed the Atlantic and appeared in North Ireland. In the same year it spread to England, being carried on for the most part by free-lance evangelists who recognized no outside authority. Some of its features were undesirable; there was much emotionalism, and outbursts similar to those which accompanied the Methodist Revival were not uncommon. Evangelicals were divided in their attitude: some of the leading men received it gladly—included amongst them were the younger Henry Venn, Canon Hoare, and William Pennefather; but some, like Henry Melvill of St. Paul's, were scornful.

That the majority of Evangelicals should hold aloof from the movement and even regard it with suspicion was not really surprising. Such movements were a novelty and some of its features were objectionable, and, after all, the ethos of the Church of England is such that its best work is done, and always will be done, by quiet, steady labours in the parish rather than by co-operating in big efforts of an undenominational character.

Not long after this revival of 1859 a movement on much more Anglican lines had its beginnings. One of the earliest pioneers was Robert Aitken, the father of a still more famous son. Bishop Sumner of Chester, although himself an Evangelical, had censured him for preaching in the streets "like a Methodist". This censure hurt Aitken so much that he resigned his living and devoted himself to preaching tours. After a time he came under the influence of the Oxford Movement, from which he obtained a deep love for the sacramental system, although his fervent evangelistic zeal remained as active as ever. He finally settled down at the little parish of Pendeen in Cornwall, where he did an amazing work amongst the Cornish tin-

miners; the part of him which had responded to the Oxford Movement found its expression in the beautiful church, modelled on the Cathedral of Iona, which he built on the cliffs in his parish. Robert Aitken died in 1873, having lived just long enough to take his share in organizing the Parochial Missions Society.

The system of holding parochial missions was really Roman in its origin. In the English Church it began to attract notice through the experiments of George Howard Wilkinson, a man truly Evangelical at heart, but one who was drawn to the more elaborate ritual of the Oxford Movement. The method, although its Roman and High Church antecedents led Evangelicals for a time to regard it with suspicion, was soon adopted by them whole-heartedly. On the advice of Moody, Robert Aitken's son, William Hay Aitken, gave up the living of Christ Church, Everton, and devoted himself entirely to the work of holding such missions. The new movement was amazingly successful. This was due in part to its novelty, but the real secret lay deeper. "Conversion is the work of the Holy Spirit", as Stock says, "and there is nothing to be said but that it pleased Him at this time, in answer to the prayers that had for years been going up for a revival of true religion, to work with special power upon the hearts of men."¹

It was, as we have seen, at the suggestion of Moody that Hay Aitken gave up his life to mission preaching. Moody himself had come to England for his greatest triumph at the invitation of another remarkable man, William Pennefather, for some years Vicar of St. Jude's, Mildmay Park. During his incumbency Mildmay "became the centre of a spiritual power which was felt to the ends of the earth". The secret of his power was a simple one: "he was a man who walked with God, who simply asked his Heavenly

¹ *History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. iii, p. 24.

Father for whatever was needed for this or that project according to that Father's will, and who found these child-like requests granted. He was the George Müller of the Church of England; and though his career was much shorter and (if one may so say) less sensational than that of the founder of the Orphan Homes, his influence upon the Evangelical circle has been incomparably greater".¹

It was at a Conference at Mildmay in 1872 that Pennefather recognized the great gifts of Moody, and he invited him to return in the following year. Accordingly Moody landed at Liverpool in June 1873, and brought with him his equally well-known colleague, Sankey. To their dismay they learned that Pennefather was dead, and the plans which had been made could not be carried out. They then began to preach in the North of England, amid rather discouraging circumstances—Moody's first meeting at York was attended by eight people only—but on moving on into Scotland a really great work was begun. An invitation to London soon came to the missionaries, and in March 1875 they succeeded in filling the Agricultural Hall at Islington with a crowd of 14,000 people. All classes of society were affected by them, from working men to the wealthy and leisured, and not the least service that Moody and Sankey did was to raise up other missionaries, amongst whom was the famous Henry Drummond. Some of the work done at the meetings was undoubtedly transitory and its effects soon passed away, but much of it stood the test of time and the harsh buffeting of experience.

In 1882 Moody and Sankey made the great experiment of a visit to the University of Cambridge. Their beginning was almost disastrous. Moody had certain quaintnesses of pronunciation, and he had unfortunately chosen Daniel the prophet as the subject of his first address, and his constant

¹ Stock, *op. cit.*, vol. iii, pp. 21 f.

references to "Dannel" aroused much derision among the undergraduates. These same gentlemen persisted in regarding Mr. Sankey as an entertainer, and loudly applauded his efforts, and even called for encores. The unfortunate start was soon forgotten, however, and lasting work was done. Some of the results were undoubtedly bad, being due to the effect of novel methods on not over-strong characters; one young man actually set out, without any training and quite without support, to convert China, his only equipment being a pocket Bible; a foolish enterprise no doubt, but perhaps nearer to the mind of the first Apostles than some more modern methods. Wild schemes were initiated because men's hearts had been deeply stirred: the fervour and zeal were there, what was needed was, in addition, patience and the controlling hand of older and wiser friends. This need was met to a large extent by the efforts of Barton and Moule. The most sensational result of the mission was, of course, the going out of the famous Cambridge Seven for service with the China Inland Mission. The leaders of this enterprise were C. T. Studd, the cricket captain, and Stanley Smith, the stroke of the 'Varsity boat.

Alongside movements for reaching the sinner and the unconverted numerous schemes were being inaugurated at this time whose object was to deepen the spiritual life of those who were already Christians. From 1874 onwards the conviction was steadily growing in the minds of many that by faith deliverance, not only from the punishment of sin, but also from its power, was possible. Those who held such views were guilty in some cases of excesses, teaching perfectionism, and for this reason many Evangelicals regarded the whole movement with disfavour. Some, however, were willing to take their part, and amongst them may be mentioned H. W. Webb-Peploe and Evan Hopkins. Several Conferences between the differing schools were held, in

particular one at Oxford and another at Brighton, and amongst those who were influenced was T. D. Harford Battersby. Harford Battersby was a man of a wide and generous culture. In his early days he had fallen under the spell of J. H. Newman, but later came to be strongly affected by F. W. Myers, whose curate he was. Having realized the value of a "resting faith", as it came technically to be called, he determined to spread the teaching which had been of so much blessing to himself. Accordingly, in the summer of 1875 he called together a convention in a field belonging to his parsonage at Keswick, and thus began an enterprise which was destined to grow into one of the most famous and important of modern religious movements.

CHAPTER V

THE LATEST PERIOD

THE most impressive characteristic of this period is the immense growth of interest in Missions overseas. The fostering of this growth was in the main the work of Evangelicals, and it was but fitting that the great Evangelical Society, the Church Missionary Society, should be the largest of its kind. When the C.M.S. was founded in 1799 there was in existence a much older Church Society, the venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, but at this time its total annual income from subscriptions and donations amounted to little more than £550; moreover, its activities were limited by its charter to British territories.

The C.M.S. itself began in a quite unambitious way, and it was some time before the name of even a single Bishop was to be found in its subscription list; but in almost every enterprise which man undertakes it is the pioneers who really count—not because of their measure of actual achievement, but because they point the way and give an example which others may follow. For some generations these early pioneers had their devoted followers, but after a time interest seemed to be languishing and enthusiasm wellnigh dead. Had the Evangelicals taken a greater share in the revival of 1859, no doubt fresh life might have come into the Missionary cause, but they chose for the most part to stand aside, and in consequence Missions suffered. By the seventies the supply of both men and money seemed to be gradually drying up, and even in the field itself little real

progress was being made. Bishop Moule quotes a Roman Catholic periodical as triumphantly (but a little mistakenly) prophesying that: "Ere long the sectarian societies will be looking in vain for missionaries, as heresy dies out."

The turn of the tide can perhaps be traced to the institution in 1872 of the Annual Day of Intercession. This step was taken at the suggestion of the S.P.G., and the date chosen was St. Andrew's Day. In 1879, in order to avoid possible offence to Nonconformists, it being thought that the choice of a Saint's Day might be unwelcome to them, the day was changed to the Tuesday before the Ascension. A somewhat humorous sequel was the protest of the Presbyterians against the slight passed upon the Scottish national saint. After trying the new day for six years, it was decided to go back to St. Andrew's Day once more, and that season is still the great time for Missionary Intercession.

In 1885 two events occurred which brought Missions overseas into public notice. One was the murder of the heroic Bishop Hannington on the borders of Uganda, the other the dramatic volunteering of the Cambridge Seven. There was something in each of these events which appealed to the imagination of Christians, and even aroused the interest of those outside the Church. The next year saw the founding of the famous Gleaners' Union in connexion with the C.M.S., an organization which under the name of the Missionary Service League still carries on a great work for the cause of Missions. The newly founded Union had a heavy responsibility thrust upon it when, at a meeting on October 30, 1891, it was challenged by Bishop Tucker of Uganda to find the £15,000 required in order to keep the British East Africa Company from withdrawing from Uganda. The challenge was taken up, and no less than £8,000 was promised in half an hour. The rest came in within a fortnight, and so one of the greatest of England's

possessions was saved for her, and one of the most signal of all the Church's triumphs was made possible.

Space will not allow more than a reference to the beginnings of the Student Volunteer Movement, which owed so much to Evangelicals. Its history can largely be read in the Life of Douglas Thornton and in that of Pilkington. Space also forbids any reference to the countless saints of God who laboured to spread His kingdom with such striking success in all parts of the known world—their names are in the book of life and their souls are with their Maker.

The last twenty years of the nineteenth century were indeed not unworthy of comparison with the great years which saw its rise. The testimony of one who was well acquainted with the history of the past, and whose own life stretched back far into the first half of the century, is here worth quoting. "Looking abroad over the field of our life and work in general", wrote Bishop Moule in 1901, "we see abundant labour and self-sacrifice in many directions. It is my happiness to possess a somewhat wide acquaintance among the younger ranks of the Evangelical clergy, as on the other hand I have inherited some knowledge of a now long-past generation. I can only say that a certain pessimism and misgiving is continually corrected, and transformed into a far brighter feeling, when I think over, in a quiet hour, the host of younger missionaries abroad and younger pastors at home whom I am permitted to call friends. I know a great many such men whose lives, I am sure, would have been watched and hailed with delight by the fathers of an elder day; lives in which the Spirit of God lives and works, energizing them for a firmness of conviction, a sacrifice of self, a multiplicity of method and labour, a manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is indeed a cheering and animating spectacle."¹

¹ *The Evangelical School of Thought, etc.*, pp. 101 f.

At home the Evangelicals were not without worthy representatives in the hardest and most difficult parishes as well as in positions of greater prominence, though not of greater usefulness. The keen intellect and wide knowledge of men like Henry Wace, the late Dean of Canterbury, who in his famous controversy with Huxley in 1889 showed that the Evangelicals were capable of defending the interests of the Church at large in a matter which required learning, is one instance. The name, too, of John Charles Ryle must not be passed by. As first Bishop of Liverpool he set an example of wise leadership and of sound administration, not only to his own party, but to the whole Church.

So we come to the century in which we are living, a century very different in character from that which went before it. The nineteenth century was austere and earnest, it had great ideals to inspire it; and because its faith was weak it clung with pathetic intensity to Christian ethics. Differences of belief were, as Stephen Paget says in his introduction to *Henry Scott Holland*, "taken gravely, as a tragedy, which now are taken lightly as a comedy". Ruskin, in the midst of his own desolating and almost tragic doubts—doubts which he felt that he shared with many of his contemporaries—could confess that he and they would remain, until some solution could be found, the most miserable of mankind. "Our own century, even before the glare of war lit up its failings, showed signs of a strong reaction; we were, and we are, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of good; somewhat disillusioned by the failure of our fathers to carry out their high ideals, and afraid of the burden of their respectability with all that it entailed; obsessed with the futility of existence, and lacking in the sense of responsibility because unwilling to exercise our powers on small tasks."¹

¹ *Erasmus the Reformer*, p. 27.

The early years of the new century found the Evangelicals much as they had been before. There was little apparent awareness of the changes that were taking place all around them; the same old cries were being repeated; the same old leaders held their power, and held it with a tight grip; suspicion of anything new was as easily roused as ever; and, in fact, the party seemed safely fixed in its rather narrow groove. Among the younger men, however, there was much dissatisfaction; some left the party, others remained on hoping and working for better things. Amongst the latter was a small group of men in Liverpool, and from them what I feel is destined to be a great movement had its beginning.

There are many versions given of the influences which first led the members of this little group to band themselves together; talks at Ridley Hall in graduate days and the possible suggestions of Douglas Thornton were among them. But the needs of the times and of the party were enough to call forth their action. Sometime in 1905 three of them had lunch together: A. J. Tait, Principal of St. Aidan's College, Birkenhead, and now Canon of Peterborough; C. Lisle Carr, Vicar of Blundellsands, and now Bishop of Coventry; and Guy Warman, Vicar of Birkenhead, now Bishop of Chelmsford. These three felt that some action must be taken to arouse Evangelicals to a sense of the dangers they were in through their internal divisions and through their failure to understand the needs of the times. The first step undertaken by these pioneers was to invite the co-operation of three other like-minded friends in the Liverpool district: H. E. H. Probyn, Vicar of St. James's, Toxteth Park; B. C. Jackson, Vicar of St. Bride's; and A. F. Thornhill, Vicar of St. Michael-in-the-Hamlet. This little group of six friends continued to meet for some months; they had no special name, though they called

themselves "the six". In order to make their influence felt they took such opportunities of expressing themselves as were afforded by gatherings of clergy in chapter and elsewhere. The points upon which they were most insistent were the need for some kind of positive policy in place of negations with which the older generation of Evangelicals seemed to be satisfied, the desire for fellowship, and the demand to be allowed to think things out for themselves, and not merely to repeat the old formulæ.

The opportunity for making a stand in a more public manner came in 1906, when Warman was asked to read a paper at the Islington Conference on "Prayers for the Dead". The paper was a challenge. Not much was said about the actual subject—the paper was, indeed, declared to be impertinent in both senses of the word—but much about the need for a newer type of Evangelicalism which should be positive, and active, and liberal in its outlook. After the Conference, Warman's father, who had been one of Lord Shaftesbury's fellow-workers, and for a time Chairman of the Ragged School Union, invited twenty-one chosen clergymen to his house at Highbury, where a momentous discussion took place. Amongst those present were, in addition to the original six: J. E. Watts-Ditchfield (the late Bishop of Chelmsford), J. C. Wright (now Archbishop of Sydney), F. E. Murphy (now Vicar of Walcot), F. T. Woods (now Bishop of Winchester), H. V. de Candole (now Dean of Bristol), Cecil Wilson (now Vicar of Swansea), Dawson Walker (now Canon of Durham), and Foster Carter (now Vicar of St. John's, Boscombe).

After dinner it was decided to form Groups of sympathetic friends up and down the country, to hold an annual Conference in the summer, and also a one-day Conference on the day after "Islington". J. C. Wright was elected the first Chairman and Warman the first Secretary, an office

which he continued to hold until his appointment to the Bishopric of Truro in 1919. The Group Brotherhood (as it soon began to be called), in consequence of the unwillingness of its members to add yet another to the numerous Church Societies, remained for more than eighteen years a private, almost a secret, organization. The small groups up and down the country continued to join together in prayer and study. Study was one of the great objects of the movement, for the need to think out afresh the doctrinal position of Evangelicals and to state in new terms the contribution which they had to make to contemporary life and thought was felt to be most urgent.

The first Conference, to which twenty-five members came, met in June 1907 at Woolton, where Lisle Carr was then Rector. After much discussion, a statement of belief was drawn up which was afterwards sent out to the separate groups and revised. In the following January, after "Islington", some fifty members met at the Holborn Restaurant, when, amongst other things, it was reported that a new series of theological manuals, some sixty in number, to express the views for which the movement stood, had been arranged for.¹ Other Conferences followed: in 1908 at Oxford, in 1909 at Birkenhead, in 1910 at Ridley Hall, and in 1911 again at Oxford. By means of these Conferences a spirit of fellowship and brotherhood was fostered which made "Groups" a thing almost unique. Meanwhile some kind of organization was felt to be necessary. At first the original six had been the Committee, now the Committee was elected. To Wright as Chairman succeeded Dawson Walker in 1909, then came Lisle Carr (1912-1915), then E. N. Sharpe (1915-1918), followed

¹ It is important to remember this first issue of pamphlets, as the Movement has been accused of copying the Anglo-Catholics in this matter.

by M. Linton Smith (1918-1920), Stanton Jones (1920), Harrington Lees (1921), Guy Rogers (1921-1923), Cecil Wilson (1923), and Vernon Storr (1924).

The society was called "Groups" because of its manner of development and origin, and in groups it continued to meet, to study, and when occasion arose to act. Some called it the "Brothers", a name which arose in consequence of a quotation by Wright in his farewell address of the line:

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.

Bishop Drury always called it the Goose Club, because at an early meeting of the "six" someone presented them with a goose upon which to dine.

Events in the Church at large, the creation of the National Assembly, the rapid spread of the Anglo-Catholic Movement, and above all misunderstandings and disputes amongst Evangelicals themselves, together with the realization that secrecy meant suspicion and distrust on the part of those outside, caused the Movement, at a Conference at Coleshill in June 1923, publicly to declare its principles and to invite application for membership.

The following basis of membership was adopted:—

"The Movement is an association of clergy of the Church of England, who, sharing in the common experience and beliefs of the Evangelical School, seek by means of group study and fellowship to interpret these in relation to modern life and thought, and to contribute thereby to the enrichment of the Church and the World.

"We confidently assert our continuity with the Evangelical tradition of the past, among the treasured principles of which we would emphasize the following: The Eternal Good Tidings of the intimate and immediate relationship of the believer to God through the redemption of the Lord

Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit; the unique authority of the Bible; the high value of the Sacraments spiritually interpreted; the passion to win individual souls for Christ, whether in the parishes at home or in the Mission Field abroad.

"We believe that a great source of strength to the Church in evangelical movements of the past has been their claim to interpret principles in the light of current thought. It is this claim which we make again to-day. Our aim is to learn the Mind of Christ as it is uniquely revealed in Holy Scripture and interpreted to us under the immediate guidance of the Spirit. Thus only shall we find the solution of the problems which confront the Church to-day. We seek His Mind concerning the Church—the Fellowship of all those who possess His Spirit; concerning the full meaning of the Sacraments in that Fellowship; concerning the union of simplicity and beauty in worship; and concerning the psychological interpretation of our Christian experience. We seek His Mind also concerning the Reunion of the various branches of the Christian Church, the social, economic, and racial implications of His Teaching, and the place of science, art, and literature in the life of the Christian.

"Finally, we desire that our Evangelical experience, thus continuously re-interpreted by means of our fellowship of prayer and study, may be shared as widely as possible by the people of our generation."

On coming out into the open the brotherhood took as its title the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement. This title is cumbrous and lacking in elegance; it has the merit, however, of representing, as a shorter title would not do, the various elements combined in the movement. It is Anglican because the members wish to express their loyalty

to the Church of England, and their "claim to share in its rich heritage"; it is Evangelical because its members feel that much as they may differ from their spiritual fathers in many things, yet by their emphasis on spiritual religion, on freedom, on reliance on the Gospel rather than on tradition, they stand in a true succession to them.

The whole Group Movement was an attempt to discriminate between what was essential in the Evangelical position and what was merely traditional and fleeting. It was an attempt to abandon mere party cries, narrow and limiting as these cannot fail to be, and to adopt a more courageous policy. That it should be regarded with suspicion was inevitable, especially in a school of thought which has been suspicious and critical, for some reason or other, from its very inception; but the Movement is trying to overcome suspicion, not by argument and controversy, but by following after those good words which are said to silence even the ignorance of foolish men.

To pick out names from amongst those who were leaders in the Evangelical School during the present century would be an invidious task—the great majority of them are still with us; the name of one, however, does seem to deserve special mention, and he is no longer with us. John Edwin Watts-Ditchfield was by birth a Lancashire man, and from a religious home he went forth to devote his life to the service of God, first as a lay-worker (he nearly became a Methodist minister), and then in Orders. As curate of St. Peter's, Holloway, he showed those remarkable gifts of influencing others which made his name almost a symbol of aggressive Churchmanship. His greatest work was done in connexion with the Men's Service started by him, a method of work which he continued when appointed Vicar of St. James, Bethnal Green. In this parish his achievements were most remarkable. He succeeded in raising funds and in

drawing together workers as few men have ever done. After seventeen years of strenuous labours he was chosen to be the first Bishop of the new diocese of Chelmsford, and during the remaining years of his life he worked with equal energy and devotion in that difficult office. As lay-worker, as priest, and as Bishop, the man was notable for his keen desire to win souls: he was a "fisher of men". No methods were too unconventional, no efforts too great, if only this end could be reached. His life of single-minded devotion to the service of Christ and His Church and the large measure of achievement with which God crowned it are an abiding inspiration to all who knew him.

CHAPTER VI

CHARACTERISTICS OF EVANGELICALISM

THE great characteristic of Evangelicalism has always been a concern for the individual. To this can be traced its strength, and from this its various weaknesses undoubtedly spring.¹ The importance of individual salvation, the insistence on the immediate relation of the believer and his God without the intervention of mediators, human or semi-divine, all these are derived from this one great principle. In placing such emphasis on the importance of the individual, however, Evangelicals are quite in accord with the mind of the Church of England, since in the Catechism the first question is: "What is your name?"—a question which is calculated to arouse in the mind of the child a sense of his own responsibility as a conscious being separate from all other conscious beings. From this principle of the importance of the individual arise, as we have said, both the strength and the weakness of Evangelicalism. Let us think first of its weaknesses.

To criticize is always an unpleasant task, and to criticize that which one loves is most unpleasant of all. But an accurate diagnosis must be critical, and my own object in recording what appear to me to be weaknesses in the Evangelical position is to warn Evangelicals against

¹ The question of the need for Reservation for the sick is not quite understood by Evangelicals for this reason. The Evangelical who is cut off from partaking in church desires in a private celebration as much of the service as possible in order that he may be edified. To the Catholic, the important thing is the partaking of "the one bread", of the elements actually consecrated in the presence of the congregation from which he is separated.

the danger of falling into them. In any case, most of the criticisms are not primarily my own, but are notorious.

In the eyes of many people, both within and without the Church, the party known as Evangelical stands condemned because it has constantly failed to take sufficient account of the life of the world at large and to allow for those changes of motive and of temper which ever mark it. To such critics the Evangelicals seem to be apathetic, and even cowardly, the victims of a "do-nothing" perplexity. The truth of this charge must be admitted, at least in part and especially as to the past. It is the result, not so much of cowardice or neglect, but, on the one hand, of an intense preoccupation with the needs of individual souls, and, on the other, of the failure of the movement from its earliest days to produce a sufficiency of leaders with a wide and statesmanlike quality of mind. The men who have guided Evangelical thought have for the most part been themselves partakers in its weaknesses.

They have had no real policy beyond the care for individuals; they have shown no power of estimating with any accuracy the needs of the complicated and varying situations in which from time to time the party has found itself; they have given the impression that they were living "from hand to mouth", and that expediency rather than principle was their guiding motive. It has therefore happened that man after man has arisen in the party, possessing weight and influence for the moment, but soon ceasing even to be remembered when once his work has been done—save, perhaps, amongst the few whom he has helped in the highest things. These leaders rose like rockets in the midnight sky, for a time all looked up to them, then they died away, and little was left.

A comparison with the Oxford Movement brings out this failure, and makes this narrowness of outlook all the more

pronounced. From the first the real strength of what is now called Anglo-Catholicism has been its power of adapting itself to circumstances. It began as an "Oxford" Movement; but in Oxford it never recovered from the shock of Newman's secession, and after a time its influence was checked. It thereupon spread into the country and adopted as its own ideals which came ultimately from teachers of other schools of thought, some of them even non-Christians. One who had felt and responded to the attraction of the Movement, but had afterwards turned from it almost as from an evil dream, could look back from his attitude of cynical detachment and note how the honey from the new Hegelian school was going into the ritualist hive. The whole history of the Movement since has been marked by this power of absorbing into itself elements from the air around it.

The reason for its adaptability may well be the conception, which has always been prevalent in the Movement, of the Church as the Body of Christ, a continuation of the Incarnation, and as such in touch with human life at all points, and prepared to welcome and to sanctify every activity of the human spirit.

Again, this narrow and individualistic spirit has made it difficult for Evangelicals to take their proper share in the corporate life of the Church. Following the Oxford Movement, there came a great revival of corporate life, a revival which can be seen in the restoration of Convocation (1854), the starting of the Church Congress by Archdeacon Emery (1861), and the Pan-Anglican Conference (1867), as well as in the renewed life of Diocesan and Ruridecanal Conferences. In these activities the Evangelicals found it difficult to take any part. For one thing, they thought them a waste of time, for another, they wished to avoid meeting those with whom they strongly disagreed on so many points.

When Evangelicals like Hoare and Ryle began to attend Church Congresses they had to face a storm of criticism and even to endure being called in derision "Neo-Evangelicals".

This inability to combine with others through suspicion of their motives and methods was not only manifested towards their fellow-Churchmen. When the Revival Movement began in 1859 the Evangelicals stood apart, and for this reason largely failed to reap any fruit from it. So great an authority as Dr. Stock considers that had they joined in they would unquestionably have guided and directed it.¹

Lack of trust and a spirit of suspicion has been one of the gravest faults of Evangelicals throughout the whole history of the Movement. By this spirit its progress has been hampered, some of its most loyal followers have been persecuted and alienated, some of its greatest sons have been made miserable. It is difficult to explain the presence of a spirit so unchristian yet so pervading; but from the earliest days it has been there; even in the training of the young it has found a place.² The recent split in the Church Missionary Society was largely a result of this spirit, this want of trust in the good intentions of others. But even as long ago as 1889 Douglas Hooper found the idea current in some Evangelical circles that the C.M.S. was not the proper society for really spiritually taught men!

Much of the spirit of suspicion arises from a narrowness of mind which insists upon making its own spiritual experience the standard by which to test all mankind. Those whose experiences are approximately similar are classed as "sound" and to be trusted—though not absolutely, they still need watching; those whose experiences are different, or

¹ *History of the Church Missionary Society*, vol. ii, p. 337.

² Henry Venn Elliott, in describing a famous Evangelical school, condemns the discipline as "harsh and forbidding. All was suspicion and espionage. The pupils were not trusted, and nothing was left to their honour or high principles" (*Life*, p. 8).

who describe them by different words, are "unsound", and to be regarded with continued suspicion. Now our own spiritual experiences are the most vivid things about us, if we are religious men and women, and their authority, whether we admit it in so many words or not, is predominant. But we shall err greatly if we regard them as entirely supreme over the experiences of other men, and as above that experience of the saints in all ages which is summed up and enshrined in the Church and its traditions. The dreadful arrogance into whose snare not a few Evangelical leaders have fallen—an arrogance far worse than that of a priest, since his is presumably official and impersonal—is due in part to the fact that emotional states are taken as being signs of the guidance of God the Holy Spirit.

Introspection and self-centredness are the shadows which dog the path of the religious man. In some this introspective spirit results in good, in many in evil. None the less great masterpieces of the spiritual life like St. Augustine's *Confessions* or the *Apologia* of John Henry Newman will always live to guide men and also to warn them. It is not by mere chance that most biographies, and especially autobiographies, are religious. In some schools of thought part of the discipline of life is the keeping of a journal in which the writer's failings and victories are to be recorded. Such of these journals as have been preserved for us make melancholy reading, and account not a little, it would seem, for the popular belief that religion is a dull and oppressive thing. The weary efforts spent in the unwholesome task of unravelling "the subtle filaments" of which all motives are compounded, the anxious inquiries, the over-scrupulous self-questioning, the petty faults discovered and lamented—all this is calculated to disgust any healthy-minded person, and is certainly far from the mind of Christ. On those who kept such journals the effect was diverse; in many cases

it took the joyousness out of life and cramped, as well it might, the activities of the soul. Upon others apparently it had no such effect, and men like William Wilberforce and Henry Martyn were known for their cheerfulness and courage amidst even the most distressing and discouraging circumstances. This type of introspective Christian, although typical of Evangelicalism, is by no means limited to it; no more striking case could be found than in *The Remains of Hurrell Froude*, the early Tractarian.

Finally, the Evangelicals undervalued those activities of mankind which did not to them seem to have a direct bearing upon the state of the soul. The world of art, of scholarship and learning, of culture in general, was not so much avoided as forgotten. They left the mind "a fallow field for all unsightly weeds to flourish in", as Thomas Arnold put it. As a result, Evangelicalism has never made any deep impression on the higher intellects of the nation. In the vehemence of their passion for individual souls the Evangelicals forgot much else. Their own theory of life loomed so vast that it shut out of necessity much that gives grace and dignity to life. Carried away by the urgency of their task, they had not sufficient poise to see life steadily and to see it whole. But let those blame them whose love for their Master and whose concern for the spiritual welfare of their neighbours can compare with the all-consuming zeal which distinguished them.

To state that all the Evangelicals were neglectful of the more gracious side of life would be grossly untrue; one needs to think only of men like Wilberforce himself, and the poet Cowper, as well as Hannah More, the "blue stocking". One of the most cultivated of them all was Legh Richmond, a name that deserves to be recaptured from oblivion. Of him Canon Overton has written that he was "like many of the Evangelicals . . . a man of a singular lovable character".

And again, "He was a man of varied accomplishments—a musician, a mineralogist, and what was rare in his day, a keen appreciator of the beauties of Nature. He seems to have been almost adored in his own family, and was (again like so many of the Evangelicals) a most entertaining companion."¹

But if some of the Evangelicals were men of culture and refinement, others, and those not always the ignorant and uneducated, showed by their utterances a strange lack of discernment and of sensibility. Even so prominent a leader as Whitefield in his addresses to the Deity used epithets which in their familiarity verged on the offensive and the irreverent—a sure sign of lack of culture and refinement. That men of lesser mould imitated and even surpassed him in this respect is not surprising.

To many Evangelicals the Bible, as the divinely inspired revelation of God, contained all that was necessary for man to know; perhaps to go outside its covers would be to exercise a curiosity which would be sinful! The truth was contained in Holy Scripture, why seek to know more? The weakness of the whole outlook has been clearly stated by Principal Tulloch. "The Evangelical school, with all its merits, had conceived of Christianity rather as something superadded to the highest life of humanity, than as the perfect development of that life; as a scheme for human salvation authenticated by miracles, and, so to speak, interpolated into human history, rather than as a divine philosophy. Philosophy, literature, art, and science were conceived apart from religion. The world and the Church were severed portions of life divided by outward signs and

¹ *The English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 87. He quotes also the opinion of Dean Burgon, *Lives of Twelve Good Men*, vol. ii, pp. 359 f., which was equally favourable. The testimony of Overton and of Burgon is not likely to have been swayed by any sympathy with Evangelical views.

badges; those who joined the one or the other were supposed to be clearly marked off."¹

In such an atmosphere, and with a background of such beliefs, it is not surprising that the Evangelicals, whilst they produced many who were foremost in the moral and spiritual sphere and as philanthropists, did not bring forth any scholars of the first rank. Even to-day the party suffers when compared with other schools of thought in this respect. It is not, as Overton admitted of the early years of the last century, that the Evangelicals are deficient in mental capacity, but that their main interests are not in learning. They show what is, after all, a characteristic of the national genius—a preference for an active over a speculative life.

In the early years of the Movement most of the books produced were concerned with the not very edifying dispute between the Calvinists and Arminians, or were devotional and practical in character. But devotional and practical books—there are, of course, notable exceptions—have but a short life; they are called forth by the needs and conditions of the hour, and when the hour passes they pass with it. The rise of the Oxford Movement brought into the field a different type of writer. The attack on the Reformation doctrines was not allowed to go unanswered, and some of those who took up the defence were little if any inferior to their opponents in learning or intellectual power. Prominent amongst them was William Goode (1801-1868), a Cambridge man who became Dean of Ripon in 1860. Later writers who followed in his steps were E. A. Litton, N. Dimock, and the revered name of Henry Wace, the late Dean of Canterbury. With the exception, perhaps, of the last named, the productions of these writers suffer from one great fault which has limited their influence and has had not a little to do with

¹ *Movements of Religious Thought in Britain during the Nineteenth Century*, p. 13.

their being forgotten; no one can deny their ability and their learning, but they are intolerably dull and long. Bishop Moule, in referring to Goode's *magnum opus*, might well say, "He would do us a great service who would give us the essence of *The Divine Rule of Faith and Practice* in a form more portable for common use."¹

So far we have been exhibiting the weaknesses which are or were characteristic of the Evangelicals; these weaknesses come, as we have seen, in the main from an exaggerated or unbalanced individualism. But from the same cause comes the great strength of Evangelicalism.

No body of Christians since the first age of the Church has exceeded them in what is sometimes called the "hunger for souls". The spirit which made George Whitefield ascend a small eminence and begin to address the colliers of Kingswood—thus reviving the almost unheard-of practice of open-air preaching—is the same spirit as that which made Douglas Thornton in our own day leave a meeting at Keswick (he climbed out of a window, as he could not get to the door) in order to preach Christ to the people in the market-place.²

The extent to which the early Evangelicals planned and prepared themselves in order to bring their friends and acquaintances to a saving knowledge of Christ is almost incredible. An exceedingly busy man like William Wilberforce could give his thought and time to this most difficult object. In the sympathetic and able biography recently published by Professor Coupland, the religious side of his life is given its due place. "Wilberforce's religion was certainly not self-centred. . . . He was eager to bring

¹ *The Evangelical School*, etc., p. III.

² It was the same spirit, too (for the love of souls is the mark of every true Evangelical, whatever may have been his sect or party), which drove St. Francis Xavier to undertake his arduous labours and to meet a noble death, burnt out by the divine fire within him.

others, through the same experience as his own, to lose and save themselves. And those gentle assaults upon his friends, which had been one of the earliest symptoms of his 'conversion', became a regular and methodical business of his life. A curious document, dated January 12, 1794, has been preserved, bearing the title 'Friends' paper', and the instruction, 'To be looked at every Sunday.' It consists of a list of thirty of Wilberforce's friends with the appropriate notes. For example:—

S—— and Mrs. What books reading? To give them good ones—Walker's Sermons. Call on Mrs. S. and talk a little. Lend her Venn's last Sermon. Education of their children, to enquire about. Prayer, etc. Their coming some Sunday to Battersea Rise to hear Venn. Call often, and be kind.

Lady A—— and Sir R. Has he read Doddridge? Be open to her.

Mr. and Mrs. M——. Encourage to family prayers, etc.

Lord and Lady J——. See them. Get at them through G. Discover what books reading.

V——. Try what he believes and speak home truths.

The J——s. Call and sound them on religion. Give them money to give away, etc. Little presents.

Lady E——. Speak pretty openly, yet tenderly.

Little could these ladies and gentlemen have known what careful preparation their lively friend was making for their good. Little, too, could those who listened with delight to Wilberforce's fluent talk, with its mingled current of merri-ment and gaiety, its unpretentious knowledge of the great world, its shrewd judgement of men and things, have guessed that he made a habit of keeping certain topics of conversation at the back of his mind which, if he could once introduce them, might be insensibly developed into a discussion of first principles. He would often spend a quiet hour thinking out these 'launchers', as he called them; and he sometimes chastises himself in his diary for having attended some social

party without 'fitting himself for company' with a good quiverful of them."¹

The wonderful tact which marked the greatest of them, a tact which unfortunately has not always distinguished many of their would-be imitators, can be illustrated by an incident from the life of Charles Simeon. One time, when staying in the Isle of Wight, he came across a young Dutchman, König by name. "The young man, full of brightness and social charm, had been sent to England to learn our language. Simeon's heart was drawn to him. He soon found that König was without religion, and cast about how 'to win this soul for Christ'. . . . One day König saw Simeon's lips in motion, without a sound, and asked very simply what he was saying. 'I was praying for my friend', was the answer. And the naturalness and love of the words found a way to the soul."²

Another characteristic of Evangelicals is the belief, again an individualistic trait, in the Holy Spirit, not merely as guiding the whole Church, but every believer; and that not as a mere vague influence, but as a Person. No better way of describing the force of this belief could be found than narrating the actual experience of one who found this truth for himself. The case is that of Pilkington of Uganda. He had gone out to Uganda full of zeal, the product of the great revival in Cambridge started by Moody; but after a time he became discouraged by the smallness of the spiritual results of his work. At last he almost made up his mind to give up and to return home. In this state he went away by himself to a small island, and there the great secret of the indwelling power of God the Holy Spirit was revealed to him. His life was transformed, and as a result the lives of those around him, missionaries and native Christians alike,

¹ R. Coupland, *Wilberforce*, pp. 236 f.

² Moule, *Charles Simeon*, p. 171.

were transformed as well. His own explanation of what had happened was very simple. "I had consecrated myself hundreds of times", he said, "but I had not accepted God's gift. I saw now that God commanded me to be filled with the Spirit." It was not that hitherto the help of the Spirit had been absent, but unbelief and other sins had prevented His taking possession of the soul. "I distinguish", says Pilkington, "between the presence of the Holy Spirit *with* us and *in* us; our blessed Lord said to His disciples, 'He is *with* you and shall be *in* you' (John xiv)."

The Evangelicals were marked by an intense earnestness, the fruit of their belief in the seriousness of the contest in which they were engaged and of the momentous issues which were at stake. This earnestness about spiritual things was one of the notes which attracted Wilberforce to the Evangelicals, from many of whom he differed on various points, such as Roman Catholic Emancipation. He himself, with all his charm, had a deep underlying note of seriousness, and so too had another whose attractiveness, if not equal to his, was remarkable, Henry Martyn. Simeon had a portrait of Martyn hanging over the fireplace in his dining-room. "He used often to look at it in his friends' presence, and to say, as he did so, with a peculiar loving emphasis, 'There, see that blessed man! What an expression of countenance! No one looks at me as he does; he never takes his eyes off me, and seems always to be saying, "Be serious—be in earnest—don't trifle." ' Then smiling at the picture and gently bowing, he would add, 'And I won't trifle—I won't trifle.' "1

In some this seriousness became morbidity and resulted in that excess of self-scrutiny which we have already seen to be one of the defects of Evangelicalism. But the better type of Evangelical was marked by sanity and good sense,

1 Moule, *Charles Simeon*, p. 140.

and Sir James Stephen's testimony to Henry Venn's "possession of perfect and uninterrupted mental health" might have been given to many of the other Evangelical leaders.

The same able critic has also testified to the presence amongst the Evangelicals of those Christian virtues which are developed in the home circle. In spite of much strictness, and what seems to a later age lack of consideration, in some of the Evangelicals their homes were training-grounds of the highest type of character and by no means wanting in happiness. If any doubt the truth of this statement, let him read the final chapter in G. W. E. Russell's volume *A Short History of the Evangelical Movement*, where from the pen of an absolutely unprejudiced writer there is given a delightful picture of "An Evangelical Home". The strength of Anglican Churchmanship has ever lain in its ability to produce, not here and there a few saints, though thank God the saints of our communion will compare with those of any branch of Christendom, but good citizens, good fathers, and good husbands.¹ In this as in so many other ways, the Evangelicals have shown themselves to be typically Anglican.

It was in the family circle and in the gathering together of a few like-minded friends that the Evangelical often found that fellowship which must be the mark of all true religion. John Wesley once wrote that the Bible knows nothing of a solitary religion, and his followers, if they were neglectful of the advantages which they might have

¹ "The Roman Catholic system . . . does not succeed with the mass, but with the few. Their complaint of us is that in England we have good citizens, good fathers, good husbands, etc., but no saints. . . . You can by artificial means grow one ear of wheat bigger than ever was seen in the fields; but if you tried the same means on the whole field you would get a few big ears and a very poor crop" (Archbishop Temple, quoted in *Frederick Temple*, vol. ii, p. 567).

found in that society which was founded by Christ Himself to be the natural home of the Christian, were eager to form other fellowships amongst themselves and even with Christians outside the Church. The great Church Missionary Society is one example of a purely Anglican foundation, the movement connected with Keswick one of a combination with other Christians.

Evangelicals, and especially those of the clergy who are Evangelical, not infrequently find that in their own neighbourhood they are in a minority, and in consequence, they feel lonely and isolated. The temptation for such is to drift away into other schools of thought or to become harsh and rigid in their attitude towards fellow-Churchmen. For such lonely and isolated Evangelicals there exists at least once in the year an opportunity of meeting with fellow-Evangelicals—that opportunity is the Islington Conference.

This Conference grew out of a small meeting of clergy called together by Daniel Wilson on January 4, 1827, at his vicarage. In the earlier years different clergymen were elected as chairmen, but after the Rev. J. W. Cunningham, Vicar of Harrow, had held the office from 1834 to 1859, the Vicar of Islington, unless prevented by illness, has been president *ex officio*. For a hundred years the meeting has served as a centre for the Evangelical clergy, and has given them guidance and confidence in the face of loneliness and perplexity. The Conference is now held in the Church Hall, Westminster, having outgrown the Hall at Islington, but it still preserves its original character and performs its original function. The Islington Conference meets for a day only and in the winter: alongside it has grown up in recent years another Evangelical Conference, meeting for several days in the early summer and admitting laity as well as clergy both to its meeting and on the speakers' platform. This Conference is held at Cheltenham, and was begun by Canon

H. A. Wilson on his going there as Rector in 1916. Its general aim is to draw together Evangelicals of *all* shades of opinion, to discuss the large questions of the day from the Evangelical point of view, and to express the conclusions publicly in "Findings".

CHAPTER VII

FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES

EVANGELICALS, on the whole, are much more concerned with action than with speculation. Christianity to them is a life to be lived rather than a system to be observed—nay, one might almost go further and say that it is not so much a life to be lived as a Person to be loved and followed. Evangelical theology has, in consequence, been always very simple and direct. This simplicity and directness have only been lost on the occasions when Evangelical leaders have been drawn aside into quarrels about such mysteries as Predestination and Election, or when different schools have sought to force their own conception of the doctrine of the Inspiration of the Bible upon the whole body.

Evangelicals are orthodox in doctrine, and enthusiastically orthodox. They are orthodox because they are convinced that right belief concerning the things of God is the surest way to right conduct, since right belief enables us to be partakers in the Divine mind. At the same time, there is such a thing as barren orthodoxy. For Pater was surely right when he warned us that "the dominant tendency of life is to turn ascertained truth into a dead letter, to make us all the phlegmatic servants of routine".¹

If orthodoxy is made an end in itself, it can hardly avoid that self-consciousness and self-complacency which seems inevitably to accompany any realized correctness. That a

¹ *Appreciations*, p. 104.

barren orthodoxy should result in spiritual deadness follows from the nature of the case, for the dogmas upon which orthodoxy itself depends are simply the crystallized experience of the Church. To make them real they must again be liquefied, and the original experience recaptured. Thus, incidentally, can dogmas alone be "proved", by showing that they are still capable of producing life.

The history of the Church and the common experience that men are easily drawn aside into error have made creeds and credal statements a necessity. In ruling out certain doctrinal statements and branding them as heresy the Church was not merely exercising an arbitrary right. It was because the opinions in question had been proved to be false, and often enough morally harmful when tested by experience, that they were thus treated. In just the same way men might close a lane which had no outlet, or which led out only on some dangerous cliff, in order that the inexperienced traveller who chanced to come to it might not waste his time, and in the end have to retrace his steps, not without loss and injury, if he were able to return at all.

The authority upon which creeds and dogmas are to be accepted is difficult to specify, for there are many claimants: the Church, the Bible, Christian tradition, the conscience, the reason, and so forth. Evangelicals, following the plain teaching of the Church of England, place in the forefront the authority of the Holy Scripture. They would say with Article VI: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required by any man, that it should be believed thereby as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

But the acceptance of the Bible as the supreme authority must be justified at the bar of reason and conscience. The Reformers held that it was to be accepted, not because of

the commendation of the Church or of any human teacher, but because there was that in the Bible which found an answer in the deepest recesses of the soul of the reader. In a famous passage Calvin has declared this doctrine unmistakably. "Let this", he says, "stand for a certainly persuaded truth . . . that the Scripture is to be credited for itself's sake, and ought not to be made subject to demonstration and reason; but yet the certainty which it getteth among us is attained by the witness of the Holy Ghost. For though by the majesty of itself it produceth reverence to be given to it, yet then only it thoroughly pierceth our affections when it is sealed in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. So . . . we believe not by our judgement or other men's, that the Scripture is from God . . . that by the ministry of men it came to us from the very mouth of God."¹ The Bible, then, was to be received because of its witness in the heart of the believer that it was of God. But this, in spite of Calvin's denial, is really to make the final authority, not the Bible itself, but "experience", since the Bible is only accepted after its appeal to the bar of experience has been admitted. The Swiss Reformer Zwingli went still further, and claimed that by experience he became independent even of the Bible itself: "He who is begotten of the Spirit", he says, "is no longer entirely dependent on a book."²

A further development in this direction, that of the Anabaptists, placed the believer above the Bible. This sect is described in Article XIX as consisting of those who "affirm that Holy Scripture is given only to the weak, and do boast themselves continually of the Spirit, of whom (they say) they have learned such things as they teach, although the same be most repugnant to the Holy Scripture". But if the supreme authority of the Bible was denied

¹ *Institutes*, Bk. I, ch. vii.

² *Works*, vol. ii, p. 250.

by the Anabaptists, the tendency of other bodies of Reformers was in the opposite direction, towards an undue exaggeration of the position assigned to Holy Scripture. It has often been stated that Luther substituted an infallible Bible for an infallible Church; and, no doubt, the statement contains much truth if the details are not pressed, for the Protestants, when engaged in controversy with the Papists,¹ could hardly fail to give to the Bible that authority which their opponents claimed for the Church; and so the denial of any error whatsoever in the Scriptures became almost a necessity, for if error in even a small point had to be admitted, the use of the Bible as an oracle whose judgement was decisive might be diminished or abrogated. The next stage was to identify Inspiration with Verbal Dictation, and so to exalt the Bible almost into an object of worship. By the acceptance of the theory of Verbal Dictation all parts of the Scripture were reduced to the same level, and as an eminent writer of the ninth century—Agobad of Lyons—had long before pointed out, the Prophets as a means of revelation were made equal to a dumb ass. One writer after another, taking his predecessor's unproved hypotheses as a basis, advanced fresh extravagances, until the Bible was spoken of as a divine effluence, a part of God, and men could be found who, after serious consideration, denied that it was a creature at all.

The older Evangelicals accepted theories of Inspiration which amounted almost to Verbal Dictation, and indeed much of their teaching is based on that or some similar view. But the Evangelical position is not bound up with any theory of Inspiration, and indeed the Evangelical, as a loyal member of the Church of England, is tied by no specific theory, for the Church has never given any defini-

¹ I use this term as the correct historical opposite of Protestant—both Protestants and Papists claimed to be Catholics.

tion of what Inspiration is, though, if it had accepted Verbal Dictation, nothing would have been easier than to define it. "The Church", in the words of the Bishop of Norwich, "enumerates the Canonical Books, but does not define the nature of their inspiration. We are, fortunately, not asked to be wiser than the Church . . . though I fear there are some amongst us who, with less reserve than the Church, arrive at a definition by confusing inspiration with infallibility, and by identifying the spiritual message of the Bible with the letters in which it is written."¹ It has been pointed out more than once that our Church prefers to emphasize the contents of Holy Scripture, rather than to define its nature—e.g., "Holy Scripture *containeth* all things necessary to salvation" (Article VI), and in the Homilies: "Unto a Christian man there can be nothing more necessary than the knowledge of Holy Scripture, for . . . in it *is contained* God's true Word". The apparent exception in Article XX, where there is reference to God's word written (*verbo Dei scripto*), is hardly a real one, since the Written Word is there used in contradistinction to the Unwritten Word of Tradition.²

All types of Evangelicals are agreed on the supreme authority of the Bible and its peculiar inspiration; at the lowest they regard it as a record of unique value of man's strivings after God, and of His response through the medium of chosen instruments. Many Evangelicals refer to the Bible as the Word of God, a wrong and perhaps dangerous practice, since, as Luther used to teach, there is only one Word of God, the Lord Jesus Himself, and one which is not justified by the Holy Scripture itself.³

¹ *The Bible To-day*, p. 15.

² See Dr. Tait in his valuable *Outlines on The Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 144.

³ The Word of God occurs in Holy Scriptures more than four hundred times; *in no case* is it the equivalent of the Bible.

It was stated above that dogmas are crystallized experience, and that the most direct way of proving them was to reduce them once again to experience. Though to many such a way of proof is of doubtful value, there is, I am convinced, no short cut to certainty. The things that are most worth proving, so is our existence constituted, admit of no logical or absolute proof. Most of us, I imagine, are convinced of the fact of our own existence; beyond that we can go but a short distance. The sensations and perceptions upon which we are compelled to rely for any knowledge of the outside world may be deceptive and unworthy of any credence. The outside world itself may be an entire illusion, and the people whom we meet mere phantasms which disappear the moment we cease to have any relation to them.¹ The proofs, then, of religion are practical, empirical, if you will, and not logical. By this I do not intend to deny to the intellect its due and proper place, or to suggest that religion is irrational. The experiences of the heart must themselves face and satisfy the demands of the mind.

The fact that our own experience is shared by others is an advantage, and yet, to be candid, a disadvantage. It is an advantage because our own faith is strengthened and our convictions reinforced by the testimony of others; though even here we must allow for self-deception, especially in details, since all religious people, and not least Evangelicals, are prone to make their experiences correspond to some type and endeavour to produce what are regarded as the hall-marks of a "converted" man. On the other hand, the facts collected by students of Comparative Religion show that experiences, which appear to be identical, are enjoyed by those who are not Evangelicals and not even

¹ Cf. Newman's reminiscence of his childhood: "I thought life might be a dream, or I an Angel, and all this world a deception, my fellow-angels by a playful device concealing themselves from me, and deceiving me with the semblance of a material world."

Christians. The day is gone by, surely, when men could describe such experiences as the work of the Devil, who thus deliberately caricatured genuine religious experiences for his own ends and the confusion of the faithful. We believe that the Word of God is the light that lighteth every man coming into the world, that rays of His light are found everywhere, and that God never leaves Himself without a witness.

But revelation has two sides, the divine and the human, for, as Westcott said of Inspiration, it is partly the insight of holiness and partly its divine reward. God is ever revealing Himself to the race, but the welcome which the race is capable of giving to His revelation, and the interpretation which men give to their experiences, differ widely from age to age, between one people and another. Even the highest minds are incapable of seeing God's truth in its absolute perfection; their own souls are defective and unworthy, and human prejudices and human presuppositions come in unconsciously, to pervert the divine. But even if minds could be discovered of so pure an essence that they could grasp the truth of God in its absolute perfection, to give to others the truth which they themselves had appropriated, or to report the things which they had seen and known, would be an impossibility, since human language is so inadequate a medium. Thus to the prophets of old it was given to see "visions of God, and in the hidden recesses of the soul to hear the utterance of the Divine Voice"; but to tell out what they had seen and experienced was a hard, nay, impossible task. Like St. Paul, they were lifted to the third heaven and were shown unspeakable things, things which they might not utter, not because of any express prohibition laid upon them, but simply because they were unable to do so; to feel and to know is one thing, it is something diverse to find expression for that which has been

felt and known. Language, even when reinforced by passion and quickened by inspiration, is but a poor means of conveying spiritual truths, for such truths are "utterly beyond the power of human understanding and therefore without equivalent in human speech".¹

Every religion which attempts to provide an explanation of the universe which will in any sense be complete must have a doctrine of God and a doctrine of man; furthermore, it must have some kind of theory of the relations between them, unless, indeed, it rejects such a possibility; if it does, it ceases to be a religion, strictly speaking, and becomes merely a philosophy.

The fundamental doctrines of Evangelicalism are no monopoly of the party, they are not certain peculiar views held by them exclusively and by no others. That which differentiates them is not a distinctive essence, but a distinctive emphasis. Sir James Stephen says that the original distinction between the Evangelicals and their contemporaries was best described "by defining an orthodox clergyman as one who held in dull and barren formality the very same doctrines which the Evangelical clergyman held in cordial and prolific vitality; or by saying that they differed from each other as solemn triflers differ from the profoundly serious".²

Evangelicals accept the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and do it not merely in order to preserve their orthodoxy—many of them, one fears, in their preaching and speaking are Tritheists—but because the Trinity expresses for them a great truth, for in itself the doctrine has a tremendous influence upon our conception of God, and therefore upon our attitude towards life. The Trinity is a mystery, but a mystery which throws marvellous light on the rest of life.

¹ Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 500.

² *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography*, vol. ii, p. 155.

This function of the doctrine was admirably expressed in an article by an anonymous correspondent in *The Times* of June 17, 1916. He began his article by admitting that to the greater part of men the Trinity is thought of as a mystery, having little connexion with everyday life, especially during the absorbing events and anxieties of the war. "But there is much in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity", he then continued, "which is relevant to our condition. It remains for us at least a historic protest against the belief in a lonely and isolated Creator. Historically the doctrine has proved a barrier against the creed of the desert, which broke in almost irresistible power upon Europe. It preserves the alternative to the creed, that in the heaven dwells a solitary Will in intolerable aloofness, whose awful eternity subdues men as the god of the desert subdues them; but the colour and warmth and love would have gone out of life. The doctrine of the Trinity has kept for the world the more satisfying thought of a diversity in unity, and a living society in the innermost heart of the universe. It is not will only that men seek in the Godhead, but love; not loneliness, but fellowship. . . . To each interpretation of the unseen there is a corresponding interpretation of human society. Two paths lie open before humanity in its corporate life. The one is the path in which nation shall strive to dominate over nation; the end will be slavery for the many, and lonely supremacy for one. That way lies no satisfaction for humanity. The other way leads through the full unfolding of national powers in fellowship to a Society, diverse yet one, where there is no lonely Dominant Power—a Society of nations, where there is a living interchange of thought and will. . . . Such a conception of Society is not only possible. It is the only conception which can satisfy mankind. It is already in being in the eternal world. The Church declares that it shall be on earth as it is in heaven. Far from being a

mere metaphysical puzzle, or even an absurdity unworthy of the notice of the thinking man, the doctrine of the Trinity is a reasonable attempt to account for facts, and at the same time a safeguard of the highest conception of the character of God which has ever entered into the heart of man."

Our whole outlook upon life, then, depends ultimately upon our conception of God. What God is to us, and what, by way of return, we render to Him of reverence and of service, these are the things which mould us and make us what we are. But any conception of God which we may possess cannot fail to be incomplete. If it is adequate to our mind, we have every right to be grateful. There is in religion, as in science, a doctrine of relativity, and just as the scientist accepts what we call natural laws, as representing only approximate truth and not truth absolute, so the theologian has knowledge of God only as He is concerned with the universe in which we live. In science and in religion alike we are compelled by the limitation of our own experience and by the finiteness of our own powers to be pragmatists. "By pragmatism we mean that form of philosophy or attitude of mind which accepts as truth adequate for the time being that which, when tested, is found to solve most satisfactorily the problems to which it is applied: that attitude of mind which is content to accept as true ideas or assumptions which by processes of logic are incapable of proof, but which are shown to be sound when put to the test of experience."¹ We are furthermore bound to conceive of God in terms of our own experience. The taunt which Celsus hurled at the early Christians is in a measure just. Man does undoubtedly think of God as a kind of superman, a man, that is, who is free from the limitations both of power and of knowledge to which humanity is subject.

¹ Adami, *The Unity of Faith and Science*, p. 9.

That such a conception of God is true pragmatically—that is, for the purposes of our daily life—would, I suppose, be admitted by all, otherwise the idea of God becomes a mere abstraction, and has it not been countenanced by the appearing upon earth in human form of the Son of God Himself? The only complete revelation of God to personal beings—complete, that is, as far as they have capacity to receive it—must be in a person. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ, then, supplements man's own discoveries and researches, and comes down from heaven to crown the structure which, by means of philosophy and natural science, he has erected upon the earth.

But though we speak of God as a "person", the term is entirely inadequate, and even misleading, if by "person" we mean a being such as ourselves. "It is certainly no part of the Christian faith that God is a person in precisely the same sense as we are persons. In fact, we might go further and say that it is no part of the Christian faith to hold that the Godhead is a person at all. On the contrary, the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity proclaims that the Godhead is the unity of Three Persons. And we must further observe that the word 'person', as used in the explanations of the doctrine of the Trinity, does not bear quite the same meaning as the word 'person' in everyday speech. What the Christian is concerned to defend and believe is not that God is a person, but that He is PERSONAL."¹

One of the great needs of the present day in regard to the doctrine of God is a new emphasis upon His Fatherhood. "Mankind was meant to depend on and centre in God as truly as a family depends on and centres in the father."² This idea was continually being advocated by Forbes Robinson, who believed that earthly relationships are the

¹ Matthews, *Is God a Person?*, p. 5.

² *The Creed of a Churchman*, p. 11.

means by which we realize the significance of the unseen world.

All fathers learn their craft from Thee:
All loves are shadows cast
By the beautiful eternal hills
Of Thine unbeginning past.¹

This aspect has of late been obscured by the spread of evolutionary views; God has become at best a Creator, at worst a mere process in time. A God who is coming to Himself in the course of years, or who is merely an unconscious force endeavouring to express itself and reach at length self-consciousness in man, is not the God and Father as taught by Jesus Christ. The idea of God as a Father does preserve His personality, and by His transcendence raises Him above the evolutionary process, and by so doing guards us against the danger of pantheism.

To the older Evangelicals, one is sometimes afraid, the Father was a tyrant, perhaps reflecting the harshness of the Roman-like fathers of their own childhood. He was ever ready to spy out and punish the petty offences of the nursery or the schoolroom, and man's one chance of getting right with Him was through His Son. This teaching is certainly not justified by the language of the New Testament, which tells us that it was God Who so loved the world that He gave, and that He was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. It is because God is our Father that He sent His Son to reveal Him as such, and this was the supreme message of Jesus Himself.

The doctrine of the fatherhood of God not only has an importance for speculation, it has also an importance for practical life. Its importance for practical life lies in the fact that it forms the only possible basis for the realization of the great ideal of the brotherhood of man. Men will never

¹ *Letters to His Friends*, pp. 112 f.

realize their common brotherhood until they realize that they have a common Father.

The Evangelical accepts Jesus Christ as the God in the full sense of the word, and without any qualification. The aspect of His work which most appeals to him is that of the Saviour. The Evangelical never forgets that he is a sinner, but a sinner who has been forgiven, a sinner who has One Who can save him. The supreme experience of his religious life is that which has been described by Wesley, when amidst the little religious society in Aldersgate to whose meeting he had come with reluctant feet, he heard one reading the preface to Luther's Epistle to the Romans. "I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away *my* sins, even MINE, and saved me from the law of sin and death." To this predominant feeling for the Lord as Saviour is due the passionate devotion to the person of the Lord which marks all Evangelicals, a devotion which has prompted a not unsympathetic critic, Dr. Hort, to speak of the dangers of what he calls "Jesus-worship". There is undoubtedly a temptation for popular Evangelicalism to become sentimental and to express itself in terms which are certainly heretical if pressed in a literal sense.

At no period of the world's history has the name of Jesus of Nazareth stood so high, and many who cannot see their way to accepting Him as God recognize His supreme position as a teacher and a revealer of spiritual truth.¹ As an ideal by which men are to live, His example is almost without a rival; but such an ideal may prove a discouragement rather than a help, the vast gulf between the ideal and man's somewhat feeble attempts to realize it making further effort seem almost vain. It is only in these latter

¹ In the East as well as in the West. See, for example, *Christ of the Indian Road*.

days that this side of the Master, His perfect manhood, has been recognized in anything like its fullness. In the Middle Ages the failure to realize that the Christ was fully human led to the cult of other mediators who could, so it was fondly imagined, sympathize more readily and more deeply with human weakness than the Son of Man Himself. This blindness to the perfect manhood of our Lord was shared in by the Evangelicals of the first days, but naturally they did not follow the medieval example by bringing in mediators. Now the hold of the Evangelical upon the true divinity of his Lord is so strong that he need not fear in learning from other schools of thought to value His true humanity to take from the honour due to His Name.

More than a hundred years ago Bishop Thirlwall wrote: "The great intellectual and religious struggle of our day turns mainly on this question: Whether there be a Holy Ghost?" In our day the predominant conception of God seems to be one of Him as Holy Spirit. The Invisible King of Mr. Wells, for example, seems to be such. The danger here is the pitfall of pantheism, to come to look upon Him as a mere influence and to forget His personality. In the faith of the Christian He cannot be isolated or thought of apart from His relation to the other persons of the Blessed Trinity.

A firm belief in the person and the power of God the Holy Spirit has ever been the mark of Evangelicals. When this belief has been strong among them they have been much used by God, when it has become vague and weak their power has lapsed with it. By this belief the faithful have ever with them the realized consciousness of the Divine presence, a presence in the heart which is independent of place or circumstance. This is the only "Real Presence" about which Evangelicals are anxious; having it, they need no other, certainly none which is dependent on any material

symbol which the process of digestion will dissipate, as in the truly horrible belief of the Roman Church. Like Brother Lawrence, the Evangelical can say: "The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquillity as if I were on my knees at the blessed sacrament".

I spoke above of the presence of God the Holy Spirit in the heart, and in so doing I was using a common figure, for since spirit cannot occupy space, God cannot be said to be present or absent. Much of the misunderstanding and much of the superstition of the present day come from a failure to realize the true nature of the Spirit. To most people it is a kind of rarefied gas, impalpable and invisible, but none the less material, and therefore capable of occupying space, of being here and not there, or there and not here, as the case may be.

In Evangelical theology the Holy Ghost has many functions to play. It is by His motion that man first realizes his sin and his need to turn to God, for without such a prompting man would never know his true state nor the possibility of obtaining a remedy. So, too, it is the Spirit who bears witness with the spirit of a man that he is truly born again. Lastly, it is by the sanctifying influence of the same blessed Agent that man becomes holy. It is belief in this function which lies at the bottom of the Keswick Movement, and to it the Movement owes its power and influence.

As one looks at the state of the Church to-day its primary need is for power, and that power can come from the Spirit alone. The old watchword must never be forgotten by a Church that would truly follow its Master's methods: spiritual men and spiritual means for all spiritual work.

Man was made originally in the image of God, and because he was made in God's image had the power of choice.

Becoming acquainted with the knowledge of good and evil, by the temptation of the devil he chose evil and fell from his original high estate. The older Evangelicals believed, therefore, that human nature was totally depraved and incapable of making any effort towards its own reclamation. Man, in the words of Article IX, is held to be "very far (*quam longissime*) gone from original righteousness".

Newer knowledge, especially of biology, has made it difficult for people of the present day to accept the old legend of the Fall. Modern science makes it almost certain that mankind, far from being the degenerate descendant of far-off god-like ancestors, is rather the growing and advancing offspring of animal forbears. In other words, he is the crown of the evolutionary process so far as that process has gone upon this earth; though he is not the end, that cannot yet be seen: Now are we the sons of God; it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

The old legend, however, is true to this extent, that since man is a self-conscious being, with some knowledge of "values" and the power of choice, he is so constituted that he cannot always choose the right, even though he may desire to do so. In this sense the human race is obviously in a "fallen" condition, and nature is imperfect and marred by sin. This fact compels us to consider the relations between God and man.

The older Evangelicals believed that a perfect relationship between God and the creature made in His image had once existed, and that this relationship had been broken by the entering in of sin. Man, because of his consciousness of the breach between them, could no longer look upon man as in the days of his innocence. Thus the feeling of guilt on the one side and of offended justice on the other made the separation complete. By his own efforts man could not atone

for his sins nor offer any worthy sacrifice. No possibility existed of renewing the old relationship; but God in His mercy intervened, and in the person of the Son bore the penalty of man's guilt. As Article II puts it, Christ "truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile His Father to us, and to be a Sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men".

The theory of the Atonement held by most if not all of the early Evangelicals was a crude one. Christ died not merely on behalf of sinful man, but in his place. Simeon even declared that Christ "in his death 'became a curse for us, that he might deliver us from the curse' to which we were doomed. Thus did he not merely die in our stead, 'the just for the unjust', as a common victim in the place of the offender, but he fully discharged our debt in every particular; so that neither law nor justice can demand anything further at our hands".¹ This doctrine was central in all Evangelical teaching and preaching. What Sir James Stephen said of Whitefield could be said, with but slight modification, of all the early leaders: "His thirty or forty thousand sermons were but so many variations on two key-notes. Man is guilty, and may obtain forgiveness; he is immortal, and must ripen here for endless weal or woe."²

Liberal Evangelicals would agree with their fathers in emphasizing the supreme importance of making the cross the centre of their preaching, but most of them would hold a different theory of the Atonement. The danger of the old view is obvious: it may divide the godhead and set up a mediating and loving Son over against an outraged and angry Father, a view which is but a travesty of the truth.³

The process by which the individual appropriates to him-

¹ *Horæ Homileticæ*, vol. xi, p. 591.

Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography, vol. ii, p. 98.

³ For an exposition of the newer view in simple language see V. F. Storr, *My Faith*, pp. 31 ff.

self the benefits of the Atonement is known to theologians as Justification. By it man receives not merely the divine forgiveness, but he is also restored to the state from which he had fallen. He is accounted righteous before God, though not for his own sake, but only "for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Article XI). The means whereby Justification is carried out is Faith, the human response to the divine grace. It is not, of course, the faith itself which justifies, Christ alone can do that, but faith is the necessary preliminary to receiving the benefits which the sacrifice of Christ has made available. In the early days of the revival two distinct and opposed schools debated the tremendous question as to whether it was faith alone (i.e. unaccompanied by works) which justified, or faith which was supported by the evidence of works. The danger of the former view was that it might cause men to lapse into antinomianism, since they might become satisfied with a status and not go on to produce a character worthy of it; the other view, in the eyes of its opponents, was dangerous because it seemed to leave a loophole by which the hateful doctrine of works as a means of justification might be reintroduced, and with it the bondage of the law.

The process of justification, or rather the act by which Christ's merits are appropriated by the recognition of Him as a personal Saviour, must be a conscious one. If a man is born again he must be aware of the fact. So the Evangelical fathers taught, and more recently it has been stated that "it would still seem to be imperfectly grasped by Christians generally that a conscious experience of forgiveness is a thing belonging to the very foundation of the Christian life".¹

Justification may give to a man the status which he had lost and may restore him to communion with God, but it does not make him holy. That is the work of God the Holy

¹ *The Creed of a Churchman*, p. 18.

Spirit in Sanctification. "Justification is concerned with acceptance", writes Griffith Thomas; "Sanctification with attainment".¹ Sanctification, and indeed Justification also, must result in service. A faith which does not ultimately produce the fruits of the Spirit is surely no true faith at all.

These doctrines provide in a most amazing way for the threefold need of mankind, a need which is innate and quite independent of any theory of either the origin of sin or the exact nature of the atoning act. Man, as man, stands in need of a threefold redemption. He needs a redemption from fear, a redemption from sin, and a redemption from what for want of a better word we may call aimlessness. Putting it in a more positive form, we may say that he requires to be assured that the powers of the universe are friendly and are sympathetically aware of his existence; that the evil in his own life and in the world around him can be overcome; and, finally, that his own individual life has real significance and is part of the divine plan.

The Evangelical finds that in Conversion, to use a popular though hardly a scriptural expression, he has received the necessary assurance that will free him from fear, and that he is now at peace with God. In Sanctification he is conscious of the working out in his own character of the status which is his already by right and the overcoming of actual sin; a process long and slow, but one whose dawn is real and the promise of the full power and purity of noonday. Service is the appointed lot of every Christian, and in glad surrender he performs his strenuous but joyful labours, and so finds redemption from vagueness and self-seeking, and an aim which lifts him above low ambitions and gives meaning and nobility to his life.

¹ *The Catholic Faith*, p. 85.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY

THE term Church is used with many connotations. To most people it means a building, originally consecrated entirely to religious uses; but now by common usage even a Nonconformist chapel, which is not consecrated and may be used for secular purposes, is often called a church. This use of the term for a building, although the most popular, is not the one here meant. The Church is the society, not the building in which a portion of the society meets.

But even in its more strict use the Church has a variety of meanings: we speak of the Apostolic Church, the Medieval Church; by this we mean the Church as it existed and was organized at various periods of history. We speak also of the Roman Catholic Church, the Greek or Eastern Church, and the Church of England; by this we mean various divisions into which the one Catholic Church has been split up. Finally, we use the word in the vague sense of any society or body of Christians, and speak of the Baptist or the Congregational Church.

When our Lord was here on earth the provision which He made for the propagation of His teaching was not to write a book. A study of Islam, which, unlike Christianity, is the religion of a book, shows us the deadening effect which might have followed such a course. Instead, He founded a society, gathering round Him a small band of men to be the nucleus of a world-wide Body. St. Paul can already speak of the Church as the Body of Christ. In the New Testament

this Body was believed to be inspired by the Holy Spirit, which is also the Spirit of Christ, and apart from the Church the Holy Spirit is not normally given.¹ The Church, then, is primarily a Divine Society endowed with a divine life, the representative of Christ in the world of to-day, "the present organ of a living Spirit" as Westcott termed it.² It is not merely a collection of believers banded together for the sake of mutual help.³ The Church existed before believers, and into it they were one by one received by Baptism. It would seem, therefore, that the Anglo-Catholic is right when he insists that the Church is a definite part of the scheme of salvation, and that any type of Christianity which fails to treat it as such is, to that extent, defective. Certainly any attempt at the religious life which belittles the Church has always about it something "pert and provincial", to adopt George Tyrrell's phrase.

From another point of view the Church is a fellowship, an association of individuals. But, as in all associations, the individuals must be prepared to sink themselves in the life of the whole, and even to allow the right of the association to overrule their own convictions. Our Lord seems to have meant His Church to be the beginning of a universal brotherhood, a united family within which all the scattered and broken elements of a divided world might find peace and unity.

The Church is, moreover, a point of contact with historical reality—a witness to the age-long development of Christianity and a definite link with the early apostolic days. It is as an historical religion that Christianity makes its appeal, and its whole case is based upon the truth of certain historic

¹ See Gore, *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, pp. 12 ff.

² *The Incarnation and the Common Life*, p. 13.

³ The Church is not therefore a merely utilitarian institution, as Arnold, for example, almost seemed to suppose. See Brilioth, *Anglican Revival*, p. 91.

facts. Its dogmas, in spite of the Roman Catholic Modernist, stand or fall with the events which are their foundation.

The original Evangelicals were loyal Churchmen, otherwise they would have gone with the stream, and on the death of Wesley have drifted into Dissent. The depth of their Churchmanship is so little known that it may be well to support it by some evidence. Daniel Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta, wrote thus of one of the greatest of the early leaders: "Mr. Simeon neither verged towards the great error of over-magnifying the ecclesiastical polity of the Church and placing it in the stead of Christ and Salvation, nor towards the opposite mistake of under-valuing the Sacraments and the authority of an Apostolic Episcopacy."¹

Daniel Wilson himself, when Vicar of Islington, took the unusual step of establishing "an early Sacrament at eight, in addition to the usual Celebration". Another staunch Evangelical, on the eve of his ordination to the priesthood, wrote as follows: "It will be a source of unmixed gratification to me if I am spared to administer the Holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Blessed Saviour to the many devout and faithful worshippers who are wont thus to approach the Lord."² Henry Venn Elliott, whilst admitting that the Church of England was not perfect, yet despaired "of ever seeing anything like it this side of heaven".³

The strong Churchmanship of the early Evangelicals did not, however, make it impossible for them to show a spirit of brotherhood towards other Christians. At times, especially in the middle years of the nineteenth century, this was attended with difficulty,⁴ but patience and willingness even to suffer wrong in the end triumphed. The position of the Evangelicals has in recent years been much strengthened

¹ Carus, *Memoirs of Simeon*, p. 845.

² Quoted by G. W. E. Russell, *Short History of the Evangelical Movement*, pp. 19 f.

³ *Life*, p. 38.

⁴ See above, pp. 52 f.

by the movement among Nonconformists themselves towards the recognition of the truth and value of the Church's system. The following definition of the Holy Catholic Church in the Catechism issued by the Free Church Council is very striking: "It is that holy society of believers in Christ Jesus which He founded, of which He is the only Head, and in which He dwells by His Spirit; so that, though made up of many communions, organized in various modes, and scattered throughout the world, it is yet one in Him." On this definition Price Hughes has the following remarks: "It will be noted that this definition makes no reference whatever to the metaphysical abstraction entitled the 'Invisible Church', which was invented in the sixteenth century. Of course, we all believe in the 'Invisible Church' in the sense that the Church Triumphant in heaven is a part of the true Church not visible on earth. As we often sing:

One family we dwell in Him,
One Church above, beneath,
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death.

But in Protestant controversy the 'Invisible Church' is used in a totally different sense to describe some Church of which every believer of Christ is a member, even when he totally neglects all the duties and obligations of practical fellowship with his fellow-Christians. Anything more entirely opposed to the original purpose of Christ or the best interest both of the individual and of human society I cannot imagine."¹

The early Evangelicals were also strict in avoiding Nonconformist places of worship. Hannah More stoutly defended herself from the charge of having visited a "conventicle", though all the world went to Lady Huntingdon's

¹ Quoted by H. S. Holland, *A Bundle of Memories*, pp. 150 ff.

chapel.¹ So, too, Henry Martyn notes in his *Journal* on September 2, 1804: "Mr. Andrews, a Methodist, begged me to preach at their chapel, which I refused, of course".

A further characteristic of the Evangelical as a Churchman was his love of the Prayer Book. The wild and exciting religious services of the Methodist were a byword, and he despised those who were content with mere forms. To him the prayers themselves, in public gatherings at least, were not so important as the preaching of the Word. But a typical Evangelical of the later generation could say: "I have always gone to church expecting to derive greater benefits from the prayers than the sermon".² The same writer has recorded his feelings after attending—it must surely have been an unusual thing—a service at the chapel of the famous Mr. Jay of Bath. "I returned from the *élite* of Dissent", he says, "thankful to God for His mercy in assigning my place in our Church, and thankful above all for the Liturgy."³ Simeon expresses the same opinion of the value of the Prayer Book and of forms in general, an opinion which was the fruit of mature consideration and finally expressed after a number of visits to Scotland, where he joined in worship in Presbyterian Churches. "I have on my return to the use of our Liturgy . . .", he says, "felt it an inestimable privilege that we possess a form of sound words, so adapted in every respect to the wants and desires of all who would worship God in spirit and truth. If *all* men could pray at *all* times as *some* men can *sometimes*, then indeed we might prefer extempore to pre-composed prayer."⁴

We come now to the subject of the Ministry, a subject of exceeding importance, since the conception which we may form of its position and function will influence our whole

¹ See Russell, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

² Henry Venn Elliott, p. 38.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 141.

⁴ Quoted in Moule, *Charles Simeon*, p. 166.

conception of Christianity itself. It is no accident which makes the question of Orders the great stumbling-block in the way of Christian Reunion.

In their conception of the Ministry Evangelicals are loyal to the teaching of their Church as contained in the Prayer Book, based as that book is on the Scriptures, and to a smaller extent on Church tradition. A short sketch of its origin is necessary.

The first question which has to be faced is fundamental. Is there any legitimate Ministry of the Church at all? Certain parts of the New Testament, especially the description of the assembling together of Christians in 1 Cor. xiv., suggest that no definite persons were entrusted with special functions, but that any member of the community might minister to the rest by way of edifying, if moved thereto by God the Holy Spirit. But over against these passages must be put many others in which there are clear traces of Christians holding certain offices. In particular the Apostles must be regarded as occupying a position of unique authority in the Church. That they considered themselves to be a distinct order is suggested by their action in filling up the place left vacant by the death of the traitor Judas.

The office of the Twelve was primarily, so it would seem from the narrative in Acts i., to bear witness to the life of their Master and to the fact of His resurrection. They had further a unique position of authority and of leadership. The New Testament contains no complete record of the growth and development of the other orders. In Acts xi. 30 we find Elders or Presbyters functioning, and their office is taken for granted, although nothing has been said about the manner of their choice or appointment. To the writer of the Acts, the Elders of the Christian Church were but the successors of the Elders of the Jewish Synagogue. The truth of the matter is that the primitive community was

not ecclesiastically minded, and had but little interest in the development of Church government.

To this dictum there seems to be one striking exception: a full account is given of the origin of the order of deacons, or of the "Seven" as they were called, no doubt in contradistinction to the "Twelve". But the apparent exception is no real one. The whole object of the narration is to prepare the way in a lesser degree for the account of the ministry of Philip, and more fully of Stephen. The strange thing is that an order specially instituted to "serve tables" should be noted only for the successful careers of two of its members as preachers and evangelists, offices which belonged previously to the Apostles.

The candid reader of the New Testament can hardly fail to discover in it a threefold ministry: (1) Apostles; (2) Elders (Presbyters) and Bishops—the two terms were used indiscriminately; and (3) Deacons. Now the period covered by the New Testament was purely transitional, and no definite end had been reached and no absolute system adopted. The truth of this is proved by a study of the strangely divergent results of attempts on the part of different Christian bodies to reproduce the polity of the Apostolic age.

By the middle of the second century the ministry has become further developed, and indeed has reached a stage beyond which, in one sense, it has never since advanced. There is still the threefold ministry, but the Apostles have disappeared, and in their place appear Bishops, who originally were members of the second order, and really indistinguishable from Presbyters. It would seem that the Churches of Asia Minor were the first to arrive at this fixed system; at any rate, so far as we can judge from the Epistle of Clement of Rome to Corinth, it did not exist in those of Greece and Italy at the end of the first century. Later these

Churches came into line, and in the end, without any legislation so far as we know, a single usage was adopted throughout Christendom. "The result appears to have come so unanimously and so inevitably, that we feel the manifest guidance of the Holy Spirit."¹

The method by which the members of the various orders were chosen is interesting. The call of God was the first necessity. In the age of our Lord's ministry it came from the Christ Himself, in the Apostolic age from the Holy Spirit. The call had to be stamped by the recognition of the Church, as represented by the Apostles. The two sides, the divine and the human, are thus, as in all things concerning the religion of the Incarnation, given their due place. On the one side the ministry is a gift from God to His Church, on the other it is an office to which proper appointment is necessary. As Dr. Griffith Thomas puts it: "If the office is put before the gift, there is spiritual disaster, for the ministry will lack power. If the gift is not duly exercised in connexion with the office, there is ecclesiastical disorder, for the ministry will lack recognition and commission".² For the continuing of the ministry the same requirements are necessary as for the original appointments; God's call, the Church's recognition, and ordination by the existing ministry. The first is impossible to test in any satisfactory manner; the solemn declaration of the individual's belief is the Church's only guarantee that God has called him. The suitability of him whom God has called for recognition for ministry in a particular sphere is a matter more easy of testing. During the early years of the Church's life and even well into the Middle Age, the election of the Bishops was actually made by the Christian community.

Ordination by the laying on of hands goes back to the

¹ *The Creed of a Churchman*, p. 39.

² *The Catholic Faith*, pp. 210 f.

days of the Apostles (e.g. Acts xiii. 3), and in the Pastoral Epistles is much emphasized. Timothy is implored to stir up "the gift of God" which is his through the laying on of St. Paul's hands (2 Tim. i. 6), and in the earlier epistle the same gift is attributed to the laying on of the hands of the presbytery and to prophecy (1 Tim. iv. 14). The laying on of hands is much valued by Evangelicals as a link with the Apostles, but they recognize that it is no magic ceremony. It will, as Dr. Griffith Thomas said, "ensure historical continuity, but not spiritual efficacy or practical efficiency in the ministry".¹

Lightfoot, in the famous Essay on the Christian Ministry, appended to his commentary on *Philippians*, states that the Church has no sacerdotal system and no human priesthood, thus standing apart from all other religions. It is indeed remarkable that no trace of sacerdotal language is found in the New Testament, a book coming from a community like that of the Apostolic Church, a community, be it remembered, which was steeped in the ideas of the Old Testament, and made up for the most part of Jews, of people accustomed to a religion in which sacrifices and sacrificial ideas were very prominent.

Westcott used to say that the nearest approach to verbal inspiration in the New Testament is the fact that the Greek word for a sacrificing priest, *ιερευς*, is never used of a Christian minister. To Evangelicals this fact is one of the highest significance, and rules out finally and decisively any doctrine of the ministry which in any sense equates it with a sacerdotal priesthood. They are willing to give value to Christian Tradition and to recognize development, but they refuse to see any true development in a process which ends in a contradiction. It is true that the Prayer Book speaks of the Christian minister as a priest, but in its use of the

¹ *The Catholic Faith*, p. 218.

two terms it is entirely indiscriminate, and no special meaning can be attached to it. The priest of the Prayer Book is in fact the presbyter, or elder, of the New Testament.

In the Old Testament there is a double line of ministry, the priestly and the prophetic. The former line was a forecast of the great Eternal High Priest, and it is summed up and completed in Him. The other line, the prophetic, which represents God to man by declaring His will and proclaiming His purposes, is that which finds its continuation in the Christian ministry.

One question now remains to be dealt with. What is the Evangelical attitude towards the ministries of other Christian bodies? Again the reply must be made—it is that of the Church of England. The blessings which have followed such ministries are fully and thankfully admitted, and their devotion and efficiency recognized; but from the point of view of Church order they are irregular, and the Church of England insists, if ministers who lack episcopal ordination offer their services to it, that they should fulfil its requirements by receiving again the laying on of hands. This is not to pass judgement upon the domestic affairs and internal usages of other Christian bodies, it is merely an insistence on what the Church of England feels to be right for her own ministry. “It is interesting”, as Bishop Gibson points out, “to notice how she treats the subject entirely from a practical point of view, pronouncing on it, not as an abstract theological question, but only as it concerns herself. She is not called upon to judge others.”¹

¹ *The Thirty-nine Articles*, p. 744.

CHAPTER IX

THE SACRAMENTS

THE sacraments have for long been a centre round which controversy, sometimes violent controversy, has raged. In part this is due to a misunderstanding and lack of sympathy between different schools of thought in the Christian Church, in part to the different place which they have given to sacraments in actual practice. Mr. N. P. Williams begins his Essay on "The Origins of the Sacraments" in *Essays Catholic and Critical* by recording the saying that "the radical difference between the Catholic and the Protestant presentations of Christianity consists in the fact that the former is built upon the idea of justification by grace imparted through the sacraments, and the latter upon the idea of justification by faith only". This statement is sufficiently true to warrant its being repeated, and it is this fundamental difference of outlook which has caused many Evangelicals, by a perverse kind of reaction, to neglect or ignore the sacraments: as if the misuse of them by others—misuse, that is, from their standpoint—was a sufficient excuse for their failing to use them properly.

Some, going even further, would abolish sacraments from the Church's system altogether. Such an elimination they would justify on the grounds that in practice sacraments have tended to obscure those very ideals which, in the opinion of others, they are primarily intended to express. Dr. Major states this point of view when he says (I am not quite certain how far it represents his own views): "In the long run of Christian history sacraments have proved bitter

enemies of those ideals; they have been the largest and most easily opened door in the Church through which to admit sub-Christian teaching and practice in the form of pagan superstition".¹ Thus the dread of magical or non-moral theories of the sacraments leads some to neglect them, some even to desire their abolition.

But to belittle the sacraments, much less to desire their abolition, is to pass an implied criticism upon our Lord; and that not as a teacher of scientific or historic facts, but, what is much more serious, as a guide in the spiritual life. If sacraments are evil in themselves, or even if sacraments are unnecessary, why did our Lord institute them? This is a question which must be faced, and the importance of it will be perceived when we remember that our Lord was in general so little interested in the ceremonial or institutional side of religion. "Moral principles and spiritual ideals, and not positive institutions, are the characteristics of His Gospel", says Dr. Major. If in the instance of the sacraments our Lord made a distinct break in His usual custom, their importance cannot be minimized by any who claim to be His followers. But did He at all institute any sacraments? That is a further question which needs answering, though, be it noted, it is only within the last few generations that men have been found in any number to ask it.

To enter into a full discussion of the question, which turns ultimately on the credibility of the New Testament records, is not possible here. In the case of Baptism the only command is that in Matt. xxviii. 19, which many critics regard as of late date. On similar grounds the saying to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit" is also rejected. In regard to the Lord's Supper, the command to repeat the meal is not found in any of the Gospels except Luke xxii. 19, and then only in inferior manuscripts. But

¹ *The Modern Churchman*, vol. xvi, p. 257.

here we have the additional witness of St. Paul contained in his very definite and careful statement in 1 Cor. xi. 24, and his witness, it seems to me, is not to be set aside or explained away by any argument which has yet been produced by those who wish to belittle the sacraments.¹

The word *sacramentum* was used in primitive times very loosely, and could be applied to any rite of a solemn character. In the early Latin versions of the New Testament it was the accepted rendering of the Greek *mystery*, a word of which St. Paul was so fond. Other early secular uses were for the *oath* which the Roman soldier took to his leader, an oath which suggested an easy connexion with baptism, and also a *pledge* which was left in a temple to represent the matter under dispute in a lawsuit. Each of these usages suggested to Latin writers different aspects of the sacraments.

The sacramental principle, the principle, that is, by which material things are used as the symbols of spiritual, goes through all life, and to the religious man in the whole world around him

the divine lies linked
Fast to the human.

It is therefore not surprising to note that this principle is found in all religions, and in the eyes of anthropologists the sacraments of the Church are merely survivals of early rites, shorn, indeed, of all that is repulsive, but still partaking of their ancient superstitious origin. But a lowly origin does not preclude a useful and even exalted end. If the Christian sacraments represent a purifying of the primitive belief, the existence of that belief is a testimony to a fundamental need of the human soul. But it is not in religion alone that the sacramental principle is found; it is found also in Nature and

¹ For a discussion of the whole question see Mr. Williams's Essay already referred to above.

in social life. It is this principle that gives to Nature and to common life much of its mystery and wonder. "Turn but the stone and there thou shalt find me; cleave the wood, and there am I", said the Master, if we may trust the *logion*.

According to the teaching of our Church, as contained in the Catechism and the Articles, three things are necessary for a sacrament in the fullest sense of the term: (a) Divine institution, (b) an outward and visible sign, (c) an inward and spiritual grace. By this test the number of sacraments is confined to two only, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In the Middle Ages the number of sacraments necessary for all Christians was four: Penance, Baptism, Confirmation, and the Lord's Supper. Mr. Williams points out, however, that the first three are really only parts of one original sacrament or act of initiation, but through the rise of the custom of Infant Baptism and the consequent postponement of Confirmation, and through the development of the Penitential system for post-baptismal sins, the original sacrament was divided into three. Matrimony, Orders, and Unction cannot be claimed to be necessary for all men for their salvation.

When we come to ask ourselves why the sacraments were instituted and with what object, we must remember to give due consideration to two different points of view from which the subject can be approached: the point of view of the Christian society and the point of view of the individual believer. From the point of view of the society, that is of the Church, the sacraments are intended: Baptism to admit to membership in the society and so to provide for its continuity; the Lord's Supper to be an expression of fellowship, of common devotion to a common Master.¹ The place

¹ Professor Gwatkin more than once pointed out the way in which the Holy Communion was working for the true brotherhood of man. See *Knowledge of God*, vol. ii, p. 291, and *Early Church History*, vol. i, p. 225.

of the sacraments in the life of the individual raises deeper questions. Mr. Williams has put the alternatives quite simply and justly when he says: "The individual Christian must necessarily order his devotional life either on the assumption that the sacraments are 'generally necessary' means of objective grace, or on the assumption that they are no more than optional pieces of declaratory symbolism".¹ The alternative chosen will depend very largely upon the individual's opinion as to the origin of the sacraments. If they were instituted by our Lord, then obedience alone, quite apart from any subjective feelings of benefit or otherwise, will make him use them; if, on the other hand, he thinks their origin doubtful, he will probably decide the matter according to his own experience. The reward of obedience in this as in other departments of the Christian life is not seldom a deeper experience.²

The question of the manner in which the individual is benefited may be left for fuller consideration when we discuss the meaning of the several sacraments; here it will suffice to state that in Baptism there is, at the least, admission to membership in the Church, in Holy Communion a sharing in a great act of fellowship and a partaking of divine grace.

To some the sacraments are merely empty signs, devoid of power except as they may arouse in the individual subjective feelings by their appeal; to others they are "effectual signs of grace"³; to others, yet again, "there is present an

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 373.

² In a paper read before the Modern Churchmen's Conference in 1926, Canon Guy Rogers described his own progress from an attendance at Holy Communion which was merely the result of the realization of his duty as a Christian, to an attendance which was followed by conscious blessing. See *Modern Churchman*, vol. xvi, pp. 448 f.

³ Dr. Griffith Thomas explains the term as follows: "A 'sign' of grace is a proof, or seal, or pledge, of grace, and they are 'effectual' because they do the work of signs effectually. They are *effectual* as

element of divine invasion and hetero-suggestion . . . a mighty Energy which cannot be rationalized or explained away as the resultant of merely 'endopsychic' factors, but proclaims itself, to those who have experienced it, as simply 'given', objective, catastrophic, numinous".¹ Evangelicals could be found whose views on the sacraments would entitle them to a place in each of the above three categories. The older generation, perhaps, and those who share their sacramental views,² would go into the first category for the most part; the great majority of Evangelicals to-day would belong, like the Reformers, to the second category; while a few would share with their Anglo-Catholic brethren the experience which would entitle them to inclusion in the third category, although their definition of that experience and of the things which go to make it "valid" would not, in most cases, be exactly the same.

The truth of the matter is that most of the differences concerning the sacraments, differences which so seriously divide us as members of a single branch of the Church, and potential, if not always actual, users of the same services, arise not so much from differences in our experience as in our definition of it. Sacraments, as Canon Streeter pointed out at the recent conference on Reservation, are *acted parables*, and as dramatic acts they partake of the nature of poetry; in trying to reduce them to prose we lay ourselves

signs. The adjective does not destroy the substantive in this phrase or make the latter into something else. The Sacraments are thus effectual or efficacious pledges or seals of grace, for the idea of a 'sign' (*signum*) is not that of a channel or pipe, but that of a seal, or pledge, or guarantee, and as such they are effectual or efficacious because they have God's Divine word of pledge or guarantee behind them" (*The Catholic Faith*, p. 158).

¹ N. P. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 371.

² "The Evangelical doctrine of the indwelling Christ radiated heat and light, but the Evangelical doctrine of the Sacraments was as cold as the North Pole", says Canon Guy Rogers of his own early experiences (*op. cit.*, p. 448).

open to the risk of taking from them much of their beauty and mystery, and possibly some of their value. Sacraments do not lend themselves to dogmatic interpretation; none the less it is upon our different dogmatic interpretations of the sacraments, and in particular of the Holy Communion, that our differences of sacramental practice have arisen.

Christianity as the religion of the Incarnation has throughout its whole length and breadth a mingled strain of the divine and the human; men differ because some over-emphasize the divine element, others the human. So it is of the sacraments. Those who see in them little beyond the "Divine invasion" tend to regard the sacraments as working *ex opere operato*, for if God is responsible for them, who may resist Him? This side of the sacraments is recognized in Article XXVI, which says that sacraments "be effectual, *because of Christ's institution and promise*". Others who regard the sacraments merely as signs dependent for full enjoyment upon certain conditions being fulfilled are in danger of over-emphasizing the human side; they too have the support of our formularies, for Article XXV says that "in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation".

The difference between the Catholic and Evangelical views of the effect of the sacraments upon unworthy recipients is a good illustration of their different points of view and of the consequent difference in their theories. Both are agreed that the unworthy recipient obtains no benefit from the sacrament. The Catholic, however, believes that he actually receives the gift of God, since it acts *ex opere operato*; but in order to save it from being a merely mechanical process he includes in his theory of grace the doctrine of the bar (*obex*) by which the recipient is precluded from deriving any benefit from the gift (except by a later penitence). The Evangelical, on the other hand, would say that

the unworthy recipient does not receive the gift at all. This was a cardinal point in the examination of the Reformers, who would only admit that evil men eat the body of Christ *sacramentally*, whilst good men ate both the sacrament (i.e. the sign) and the *matter of the sacrament* (i.e. the thing signified) as well.¹

(a) BAPTISM

The outward sign of Baptism is the water, and a more fitting symbol for cleansing could not well have been chosen, especially if the rite be performed in the original manner by immersion. The penitent or convert is plunged beneath the water and the defilements of his body are removed, a meet sign of the purifying process which he believes has taken place within. "The cleansing water becomes to him the vehicle of the Divine forgiveness, which can alone cleanse the soul from its stains."²

The work of Baptism is manifold, if we take the statements of the Catechism and Articles for our guide. By Baptism, those who come with faith and penitence are grafted into the Church, their forgiveness is sealed or guaranteed, their faith is confirmed, and grace is increased to them. Not only is it a rite by which men are admitted into a society, by it they are also given a new status. Baptism is thus a mark of Christian discipleship, but its meaning cannot be limited to the opportunity which it gives, for the adult at least, of making an open profession

¹ The Reformers seem here to have the support of the Early Fathers, for St. Augustine says: "He that abideth not in Christ and in whom Christ abideth not, without doubt he eateth not Christ's flesh nor drinketh His blood, although he eat and drink the sacrament of so great a thing unto his damnation". St. Jerome also says: "As long as they be not holy and clean in body and spirit, they do not eat the flesh of Jesu, nor taste of His blood". (Quoted by Dimock, *Concerning the Eucharistic Presence*, vol. i, p. 58.)

² Gamble, *Baptism*, etc., p. 5.

of his belief in Christ. In the New Testament, at least, it never signifies merely the profession of belief in Christ.

If we desire to know the significance of Baptism we shall not make much progress if we limit our researches to the human side; it is when we try to see it from the divine that we are more likely to get at its meaning. After all, Baptism is not something that we do to our own selves, it is something that God does for us. In the Old Testament the rite is always associated with the idea of ceremonial purification with a view to dedication for some definite purpose. The Baptism which John preached sounded the same note. In describing Christian Baptism the New Testament writers are not at pains to define it in any exact way or to discriminate between it and its predecessors.

How far did Evangelicals believe in the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration? In his interesting study of *Thomas Arnold*, R. J. Campbell says that on this cardinal doctrine "Evangelicals and High Churchmen were most plainly differentiated from each other" (p. 175). This is an exaggeration, for the Evangelical leaders themselves were by no means unanimous on the question, and Henry Melvill could roundly declare that "the Church of England does hold and does teach Baptismal Regeneration", and further, that the fact would never have been disputed "had not men been anxious to remain in her communion, and yet to make her formularies square with their own private notions". In holding this belief such Evangelicals were merely following the teaching of Wesley, who did not hesitate to say that "it is certain our Church supposes that all who are baptized in their infancy are at the same time born again".

Christian Baptism then has the two notes of purifying and purpose, and in its primary meaning it may be defined as "a symbolical act by which God designates us for union with Himself and for our reception and enjoyment of all the

blessings included in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . It is a visible sign to which is annexed a promise, and an assurance of God's favour and gracious goodness towards us".¹

The requirements of penitence and faith which our formularies demand from the person to be baptized raise difficulties when, as is customary in the Church of England, that person is an infant. Most of these difficulties, however, arise from regarding the rite from the point of view of the individual only. But Baptism has a social side and is the admission into a society. For the child it is, at the lowest, dedication to God. "It means that in the earliest days of our life, when we were unconscious of even life itself, we were surrounded by the Divine blessing, and by the influence of paternal and spiritual love, and brought to the house of God, there to be marked and designated for God's possession and use."² The Church takes Infant Baptism for granted, and does not stop to argue about it, merely laying down the rule that "it is in any wise to be retained in the Church as most agreeable with the institution of Christ".³ The story of our Lord's blessing little children, as narrated in Mark x. 13-16, clearly proves that He held them capable of receiving a spiritual gift. That the child will afterwards be trained in Christian ways and informed of the privileges to which it has been admitted is obviously assumed in infant Baptism. For as Archbishop Ussher says: "As Baptism administered to those of years is not effectual unless they believe, so we can make no comfortable use of our Baptism administered in our infancy until we believe. All the promises of grace were in my Baptism estated upon me, and sealed up unto me on God's part; but then I come to have the profit and benefit of them when I come to understand what grant God

¹ Griffith Thomas, *The Catholic Faith*, pp. 163 f.

² *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 8 f.

³ See Article XXVII.

in Baptism hath sealed unto me, and actually lay hold on it by faith".¹

(b) HOLY COMMUNION

To the Evangelical this sacrament is above all else a meal, the Supper of the Lord. The declared purpose of the Master and the historical context in which the original meal took place make it impossible for him to allow this side of it in any way to be obscured. The Lord broke bread that He might give it to the disciples, and those who would know Him "in the breaking of bread" must be fellow-sharers in a common meal, not mere spectators of a dramatic performance, however venerable and sacred. The Holy Communion is the Christian's Passover, and Jesus is the new Paschal Lamb; because "Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us, therefore we keep the feast" (1 Cor. v. 7). The Jew who wished to obtain the benefits of the old Passover had actually to partake of the sacrificial lamb; the Christian who would obtain the benefits of the new must also partake of the sacrificial lamb. "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in him" (John vi. 56). "The action of eating and drinking is the very core and centre of the sacrament which Christ ordained; if this is left out, the sacrament is without its vital centre."²

It is because Evangelicals believe in the Holy Communion as a meal that they have a suspicion of non-communicating attendance as liable to take away the real meaning of the sacrament and to encourage uses of it which to their mind are dangerous and unjustifiable. For the same reason Reservation for any other purpose than that of communicating the sick is regarded by them frankly as a wrongful and injurious practice; the same condemnation

¹ Quoted by A. E. Barnes-Lawrence, *Confirmation Lectures*, p. 48.

² E. P. Boys-Smith, *Holy Communion* (A.E.G.M. Pamphlet No. 53), p. 13.

would be passed upon devotions before the reserved elements or element.¹

In the primitive Church participation was the only universal rule; in fact, an early Christian would have been puzzled to know why Christians should come together for the Lord's Supper unless they intended to join in the breaking of bread and thus to show forth their common membership in Christ's Body. The absence of a practice from the primitive Church does not mean of necessity that it is a harmful one, but any practice which has arisen since must needs justify itself and show that it involves no principle contrary to the spirit of the early Church, especially as that spirit is preserved in the Holy Scriptures. Now the use of the elements for the purpose of adoration belongs obviously to that cycle of ideas which is centred in the so-called doctrine of transubstantiation. This theory is definitely rejected by Article XXVIII as overthrowing the nature of a sacrament and liable to bring in many superstitions. The whole conception of a local presence *in* the bread and wine is a material one. Perhaps by a kind of religious homeopathy in this materialistic age, the belief makes its appeal to men and women who long for the Presence of the Unseen, but who are incapable, or seem to be so, of apprehending it without the assistance of material symbols. But to Evangelicals the whole idea is repugnant, and the exaggerated forms which it sometimes takes, as when men speak of Jesus as imprisoned in the tabernacle, or dwelling in a house of bread, are positively irreverent.

Sacraments, as we have seen, are material means of

¹ The custom of adoring the reserved elements is undeniably late. In the Alcuin Club tract on *Reservation* by D. L. Murray the following statement by Father Thurston, S.J., is quoted: "In all the Christian literature of the first thousand years no one has apparently found yet a single clear and definite statement that any person visited a church in order to pray before the body of Christ which was kept upon the altar."

expressing spiritual truths. They arise because spirits normally require some medium through which to influence one another. The sacraments are means of grace, because the Supreme Spirit, God Himself, uses them for bringing blessing to His children. As Christians we believe that God is immanent in all material things. But by saying that God is immanent in material things, we do not mean that He is *within* them by a kind of local presence, for spirit cannot occupy space; we mean rather that He uses matter as "an expression of His Thought and an instrument of His will".¹ God can use bread and wine for the carrying out of His purposes, but to think of Him as being immanent in them in a special manner is very difficult from a philosophic point of view. Moreover, God expresses Himself more freely by means of the more highly organized forms of matter, and highest of all through human personalities. "To find a special Presence in the material elements of the sacraments, rather than in the persons of the worshippers, would involve a retrogression which is incompatible with all the evidence we possess of God's relation to created things."²

The other lesser sacraments, as they are sometimes designated, call for no comment here, save perhaps for a mild protest against the confused language of Article XXV in reference to them. To one of these lesser sacraments the Article can hardly apply, for Confirmation, so we may hope, is not a "corrupt following of the Apostles", nor merely one of the "states of life allowed in the scriptures". To Evangelicals it has a profound significance, not only because it is an opportunity, especially valuable in a church where baptism in infancy is the normal method, of publicly confessing faith in Christ, but also because it is the occasion

¹ H. B. Gooding, "The Sacraments", in *Liberal Evangelicalism*, p. 157, upon whose arguments much of this paragraph is based.

² *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

upon which the believer receives, by the laying on of Apostolic hands (cf. Acts viii. 15 ff.; xix. 6), the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Evangelical belief was well expressed in the volume of Essays entitled *The Creed of a Churchman*: "However important the attitude of the candidate may be, it must never be forgotten that the essence of Confirmation, as plainly shown in Scripture, is the gift of the Holy Spirit of Pentecost to the individual soul" (p. 33).

CHAPTER X

THE FUTURE OF EVANGELICALISM

BY its antecedents Christianity is a forward-looking religion. To the pagan the golden age might always lie in the distant past; to the Jew, in spite of the legend of Eden and the Golden Kingdom of the Book of Daniel, it always lay in the future, in the coming reign of the Messiah. Evangelicals may be permitted, like any other Christians, to endeavour to prepare themselves for the task that, with all its amazing difficulties and all its glorious hopes, lies ahead of them.

The task that lies ahead of Evangelicals is, of course, exactly the same as that which lies ahead of the whole Church, but for members of this school of thought there is a call of real urgency to face it and to declare the principles upon which the party relies and even the methods which it proposes to adopt. For the Evangelical party stands at the cross-roads: it must either adapt itself to new conditions—if so, it has a future, I believe, great beyond that of any other party in the Church—or else it must lapse almost into nothingness. If it can adapt itself, then there will be drawn under its banner in the fight against evil and indifference many who at present belong to no party in the Church—nay, even do not dare to call themselves Churchmen, who even profess that they have “no use” for any form of organized Christianity at all. To these and to others it will bring a new hope in an age which to them seems like a desolate autumn burying their ideals beneath

Leaves pallid and sombre and ruddy,
Dead fruits of the fugitive years.

This part of my book has therefore been written with a sense of real responsibility and of urgency. Some things in it may seem drastic and even ruthless to older Evangelicals, but those who would desire to help their Church and nation at this juncture must be prepared to wear the mantle of Jeremiah, whilst repudiating that imperfect though popular conception of him as a pure pessimist. Whilst his contemporaries were crying "Peace, peace" where there was no peace, trying to soothe with soft words the patient whose ills they had never really investigated, Jeremiah purposed to go far deeper: he was determined, in Bacon's words, "to search the wounds of the country, not to skim them over"; and whilst the "false prophets" poured in the oil of the physician, he constantly declared that the only hope of salvation lay in the surgeon's knife.

Our age is one of unrest and almost of rebellion. Like the age of the Reformation in Germany, it is suffering from the abolition of old sanctions and the repudiation of ancient authorities.¹ Just as the North German of the sixteenth century found himself at sea when the power of the strict and infallible Church was withdrawn, so the men and women of to-day are floundering amidst cross-currents. Parents and teachers have no longer the same restraining power as they had in older generations, whilst the Church and the Bible are considered to have at best a very doubtful authority. Ideas and practices are springing up which are full of peril, and the very foundations of morality are themselves being questioned.

Many have been led astray by the mistaken following of what they imagine to be the teaching of the "new" psychology into the belief, so acceptable to the self-indulgent nature, that to curb the natural desires is dangerous, and that such "repressions" are liable to lead to "complexes"

¹ Cf. *Erasmus the Reformer*, pp. 50 f.

and a neurotic condition of mind. Professor McDougall utterly condemns such ideas, stating quite clearly that "much vague acquaintance with the doctrines of Professor Freud is widely spread, and grossly false deductions from them are widely current and countenanced in not a few books. Of all such misinterpretations, that of the dangers and evil consequences of 'repression' is most widely accepted, just because it seems to give licence to unrestrained indulgence, to excuse us from all efforts at self-control. And so we hear much nonsense about living out our nature, and about free self-expression and about our rights, and especially women's rights, to happiness and experience, and what not; and much scornful comment on old-fashioned conventions and restraints. I would assure the reader that neither Professor Freud nor any other judicious psychoanalyst countenances the popular deductions to which I refer."¹ The truth of the matter is, as a scientist like Professor James Simpson proclaims in *Man and the Attainment of Immortality*, that the course of evolution seems to depend upon man's ability to deny his lower instincts the unreasonable gratification for which they crave, and by so doing to co-operate in the purpose of God which underlies the whole process. Evolution is not only a moving forward but a moving upward as well.

Loose and mistaken opinions obtain a wide circulation through the newspapers and through sensational novels, and young and inexperienced readers are easy victims, possessing as they do but a small stock of sound principles and high standards by which to test them. Evangelicals in particular have suffered by the undermining of the doctrine of the infallible authority of the Bible—an authority which it ought never to have had—and for the time must suffer just as their predecessors in Germany suffered temporarily by

¹ W. McDougall, *Character and the Conduct of Life*, p. 39.

the undermining of the authority of an infallible Church. In times past the belief in a material heaven and a material hell served to keep weaker souls in the path of virtue by the hope of reward or the fear of punishment. Such a belief has now hardly any operative force. This is not all loss, for obedience which rested on such a basis had but little moral value, and could hardly have been well-pleasing to Almighty God. The vision which came to an old saint of a man bearing a flaming torch and a bowl of water, the one to burn up heaven and the other to quench the fires of hell, in order that men might serve God for Himself alone, is a true parable.

The hurry and bustle of modern life affects Evangelicalism more than any other party, because the faith of an Evangelical is such a personal thing and dependent for its maintenance, or at least for its vigour, on the preservation of a close relationship between the believer and his God. This means time alone with God in prayer and Bible reading, habits which are apt to be less frequently cultivated than in quieter times. So, too, the growing secularism of the Lord's Day hits Evangelicals more than others, for the old-fashioned Sunday, although it was in many instances a burden to the flesh, yet if wisely ordered was a potent factor in training young people in a deep and genuine personal faith. In general the duty of training the young is much neglected by parents. The older generation handed on their own faith, not only by example but by definite teaching, to their children; the present over-occupied generation is too often content to leave this office to the schoolmaster or the clergyman.

On the other hand, signs of a hopeful nature are not wanting. Chief among them I would place the demand for reality and absolute sincerity in religious matters. There are still many quarters in which people predominate "who

would be equally shocked to see Christianity doubted or put into practice", but the spirit of the age as a whole is definitely opposed to mere formalism. No one can deny that nominal Christianity has prevailed extensively in the past, that Churchmanship has been regarded as a mark of respectability, the "proper thing"; this is so no longer, or at least not to the same extent, and we thank God for it. Now we can tell where we stand. Now we can see who are our allies and who are our foes. Now we can recognize that the seekers after God are to be differentiated from the seekers after social position.

Everywhere this demand for sincerity is accompanied by a vague disquiet, a searching after some object which will satisfy the soul and still its needs; in many it is a mere uneasiness, not yet become articulate as the desire for God and spiritual realities. Souls are weary and lonely in their darkness. More and more we shall find that new ways of preaching the old Gospel will appeal to these solitary ones. And the new ways surely demand the abandoning of much of the old theology, based, as it was, on authority and worked out by logic, often degenerating into a lifeless scholasticism. In its place we need a new theology based on psychology and a wider experience. All these necessary changes are along the natural line of Evangelical development.

But the worthiness of Evangelicalism, as a party or school of thought within the Church of England, to survive and grow is not a matter which can be decided by discussion or argument, by assessing probabilities or canvassing hopes based on the observation of the tendencies of contemporary thought. It is in the practical life of the parish that the question will be decided and the answer found. The double task of the Church as a whole, to spiritualize Christians and to win the non-Christians to the allegiance of its Lord, will

be carried out not by thinkers and leaders in the ultimate event, but by multitudes of faithful workers.

The past must not be allowed like a chrysalis to cramp the growing organism. New forms must be found and new ways of expressing new life. But at the same time the great and glorious heritage which we as Evangelicals have received must neither be despised nor ignored. From its rich treasures fearlessly and boundlessly we must draw our stores, not falling into the danger of being led away by a desire for mere novelty. The Gospel must be fitted to the age, but the age must also be made to conform to the Gospel. Here the fact that the Evangelical is also a Churchman is of immense value in giving him an independent standard by which to test his own ideas and desires.

The fear of compromising himself by being a definite Churchman no longer exists for the Evangelical. It has ebbed away like a bitter tide—please God never again to flow—and though like a tide it may have left pools on the shore, these too will dry up beneath the light and heat of the sun. Among the younger men, those who call themselves “Liberal Evangelicals”, although there is a natural dislike of the many Roman and non-Catholic customs which some would introduce into the English Church, and even a determination to oppose them—though such a negative policy is very distasteful in the face of the common enemy—there is a full sympathy with the historic Anglican position. If I may again venture on a statement which may sound like a paradox to many of those who read it, the Anglican of the seventeenth century and even Tractarians like Dean Church, did they return to the scene of their former labours, would find themselves much more at home among members of this group in the Church than among some who regard themselves as their direct successors.

All schools of thought would alike claim to go back to

our Lord and the early ages of the Church as recorded in the New Testament. The older Evangelicals tended to ignore what lay between that age and the Wesleyan Revival, or at best the Reformation. The newer Evangelicals tend to go back farther, to the great movement which gave birth to the Reformation, to that awaking of the faculties of man which we call the Renaissance. But they are going back to the Renaissance not as it developed in Italy among men like Lorenzo Valla and Poggio Bracciolini, but to the purer form assumed by it in Northern Europe after its passage of the Alps, and to the very crown of the whole movement, Erasmus of Rotterdam.

In my Hulsean Lectures, *Erasmus the Reformer*, I pointed out that in three spheres of human activity the Church, learning the lesson from Erasmus, must bestir itself. Its threefold task is (a) to make full use of the new knowledge, (b) to relate our Lord's teaching to the economic and social problems of the times, and (c) to bring back art into the service of religion.¹ In the carrying out of these tasks Evangelicalism will once again find its soul and enter upon a new life of usefulness and splendour.

(a) INTELLECTUAL RECONSTRUCTION

That the whole background of man's life has been radically changed during the past two generations would, I suppose, be admitted by all. The adjustment of religion to meet this change has not yet fully been carried out. Amongst scholars and the greater part of the clergy the new knowledge is taken for granted, but what is now needed is an organized and sustained attempt to spread abroad amongst the multitudes results and ideas which are commonplace in the more learned circles. The revival of the Evangelical party, and its revival in such a way as to enable it firmly to grasp

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 105 ff.

the new knowledge which is now the permanent possession of humanity, would provide the greatest hope of such a development becoming actual.

At present the Evangelical is probably the least carefully instructed of all Churchmen. This is a deplorable thing and demands the most strenuous efforts to remedy it, for, as Dr. Griffith Thomas most truly says: "There can be no full Christian life without definite, careful, clear, and continuous instruction".¹ Many reasons could be advanced in explanation of this weakness in the party. Some Evangelicals have a fear of learning and modern knowledge, thinking that they lead to coldness and indifference; some rely so entirely on the emotions that the powers of the mind are given but a lowly place; some believe that the individual, without any outside help, can obtain all that he needs from the reading of the Bible; many are unable to give the time to study—this applies especially to the members of the clergy—because all their energies are taken up by the calls of an active life. This over-activity has been the bane of Evangelicals at all times, for it has involved amongst them a dangerous neglect of scholarship. During the last few years two volumes have been produced by the more liberal members of the Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic parties respectively—*Liberal Evangelicalism* and *Essays Catholic and Critical*; they deal with the same range of subject, and a comparison between them at once suggests itself. Such a comparison reveals clearly the strength and weakness of Evangelicalism. *Liberal Evangelicalism* is the product for the most part of men engaged in practical work, and the essays have all the marks of being hurried productions, the fruit of spare hours snatched with great effort from other labours; as a result they are mostly thin and superficial. With a few exceptions,

¹ *The Catholic Faith*, p. 17.

such as the essay of Canon Storr on "The Person of Jesus Christ", they will not bear comparison with the work in the other volume, either for depth of thought or weight of scholarship. *Essays Catholic and Critical*, on the other hand, is the work of men whose whole life is given up to teaching and thinking, "dons" for the most part, and the difference is seen in the different quality of their work. I do not mean to suggest that man for man the writers of *Essays Catholic and Critical* are superior intellectually to those in *Liberal Evangelicalism*, but they are by training and opportunity superior as thinkers and writers. Here in an epitome is the difference between the two parties and the strength and weakness of Evangelicalism. The Evangelical, now as in the days of his fathers, is drawn almost irresistibly to a life of practical service; he has no time for thinking out a clear system of thought and doctrine; he is content with a few simple ideas which he holds firmly and sometimes obstinately. The older Evangelicals may, as Gwatkin was fond of saying, have abstained from learning like the beasts that have no understanding; the younger men, however, have an immense respect for scholarship, but it is the scholarship of others, they themselves must preach the Gospel.

Amongst these younger men there is real danger lest a superficial and second-hand knowledge should lead them too far in a Liberal direction. Reacting strongly from the obscurantist position of their fathers, they may become too rationalistic, and as such ashamed of the somewhat naïve and simple faith of the older generation. They are tempted to believe

that, though sand run through sieve,
 Yet earth now reached is rock, and what we moderns find
 Erected here is Truth, who, 'stablished to her mind
 I' the fullness of the days, will never change in show
 More than in substance erst: men thought they knew; we know!

The term "liberal" seems to have a strong attraction for these younger men, and they regard the cry of freedom as one which will draw to them numbers of those who at present are outside the influence of religion altogether. But though freedom may be a great watchword, its appeal comes only to the oppressed and those who sympathize with them. In religion it is not calculated to gather adherents to any party, since those outside already enjoy a much greater measure of freedom than any which they can be promised as members of a religious party. Liberalism will never make a strong appeal to the many, and as such it is, from the standpoint of expediency, a bad party cry. Its ideas gradually get diffused by the efforts of the few, but it is not so attractive as more positive creeds, and the fate of religious associations on liberal lines seems to be to have a stationary membership and a rapidly ageing constituency. If the new Liberal Evangelical movement is to flourish, it will do so not by emphasizing the liberal but the Evangelical portion of its heritage. The test of mere numbers, however, is no safe guide to the extent of the influence exerted. Our Lord's ministry is an abiding warning against the danger of statistics in spiritual things. Now we seem to ignore that warning, and to think that by counting heads, the number of our communicants or of our converts, we can assess the value of our work. Truth is more than success, and must not be sacrificed for an easy but ephemeral triumph. Had our blessed Lord appeared in modern times to begin His ministry, it seems probable that the Devil would have approached Him in the guise of an American revival agent.

People do not want systems, they want a living God. They are not greatly concerned about the logic of their faith, but they care intensely for the things that give them strength to meet life's trials and difficulties. Religion is primarily an emotion or perhaps better an experience, and

though it is necessary to formulate the experience, the formulary may become a mere skeleton and the religion "anatomical" in consequence.

The Methodist Movement which gave the first impulse to the Evangelical Revival was in part a reaction from the coldness and dryness of eighteenth-century religion. So to-day there is the need for a clear and definite faith, austere and yet tender, marked by moral earnestness and depth of devotion. This definite faith can be found, so we Evangelicals believe, in the Gospel; but in the Gospel in the full sense of the word, not merely a gospel about Jesus, but the gospel which He Himself came to bring.

The ministry of Jesus began with His proclaiming the Gospel of God (Mark i. 14). This is usually taken to mean the good news which *comes from* God; but it can also mean the good news *about* God.¹ The content of our Lord's preaching which was most calculated to bring joy to His hearers was certainly His teaching that God was not a stern monarch or lawgiver, but a loving Father. Later He told His disciples that the gospel was to be preached to all nations, but this gospel was the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matt. xxiv. 14; cf. iv. 23, ix. 35). In their desire to follow St. Paul,² Evangelicals have been forgetful of this other gospel, a gospel of wider scope and perhaps of even deeper significance. Certainly the "social" Gospel must not be neglected in the present state of society.

To the old, crude Evangelical it might seem that had Jesus come and given no teaching at all but simply died on the cross, the gospel in all its fullness could still be preached.

¹ Sanday and Headlam say of the phrase in Romans i. 1: "It is probably a mistake to restrict the force of the gen. to one particular aspect. . . . All aspects are included in which the Gospel is in any way related to God and Christ."

² It is by no means certain that Evangelicals have really understood St. Paul's teaching as a whole. See above, pp. xi and 50.

Judged by this standard, Jesus Himself did not "preach the gospel". This is stated quite definitely by Martin Luther, who in the Preface to 1 Peter recommended his followers to read St. Paul's Epistles, as they were "more a Gospel than Matthew, Mark, and Luke. For these do not set down much more than the story of the works and miracles of Christ; but the grace which we receive through Christ, no one so boldly extols as St. Paul".

The gospel needs to be preached in *all* its fullness, but in terms which can be understood of a generation to whom the sacrificial language of the Old Testament is at best not familiar, at worst simply disgusting. Most of our younger preachers have long ago adopted this course, but there are many who, in their desire to be thought "sound", still cling to the usages of a bygone age. The needs of simple and elderly folks must be respected, but for the young the fuller gospel released from misleading and objectionable accretions must be broadly proclaimed.

In proclaiming our gospel we must be ready to admit that on some points we are uncertain. An example of this uncertainty can be found in the doctrine of the Second Advent. The old-fashioned Evangelical, closing his eyes to many difficulties, can still announce the return of the Lord in the clouds of heaven, and if he is sufficiently rash will foretell the date. The newer Evangelical is compelled by the New Testament evidence taken in its completeness to confess that he cannot speak clearly on the question, though he insists that the Apocalyptic element, borrowed largely from extra-Biblical sources, shall be stripped off from the doctrine. Thus on many points fuller knowledge and wider experience demand a greater latitude of interpretation. Above all, orthodoxy is not to be pressed as a necessity for salvation so that young people are oppressed by the fear of being unbelievers. Love is greater than even faith itself, and the

gospel was proclaimed not to add a new fear and burden to man's life, but to bring a new freedom.

There is one point at which the young must be protected from the well-meaning but erroneous efforts of their elders—that is the position of the Bible, and especially of the Old Testament. This is so important that even at the risk of hurting the feelings of some who may read this book I must be quite candid.

Evangelicals have been longer than any other party in the Church in throwing off what Professor Sayce has described as "heathen theories of inspiration"; and this clinging to an obsolete interpretation of a Church doctrine has stood in the way of progress—so we have been assured by a competent outside witness. The recent controversy in the C.M.S., regrettable on so many grounds, has gone to show that there is no greater burden of "Orthodoxy" laid upon Evangelicals than upon any other members of the Anglican communion. It was once said by the German historian Sohm that "the natural man is a born Catholic"; this saying, which was often on the lips of Professor Gwatkin, means simply that the natural man prefers to walk by sight rather than by faith; that he is ever on the look out for some infallible authority, be it a Bible or a Church, which will save him from the necessity of making up his mind for himself. Men take refuge thus in religions of authority as a shipwrecked mariner takes refuge on a desert island, not realizing the limitations to which they will be committed, but anxious only to escape from the waves. So old-fashioned Evangelicals cling to a narrow and untenable doctrine of inspiration from sheer terror. This attitude must not be recommended to the younger people; it is an insult to their intelligence and dishonouring to God.

There are those who would proudly tell you that they regard every word of the Bible from the first chapter of

Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation (or, as they usually term it, Revelations) as inspired by God. In a sense they are right, but not in the sense that all the writings are of equal value. To call the Bible the Word of God without qualification is incorrect and misleading; I would even go so far as to call it blasphemy. To imagine that God could act as He is described as acting in 2 Sam. xxiv. 1 is simply impossible for anyone who has received the "good news of God" as proclaimed by Jesus Christ. Deliberately to make a people sin in order to have the chance of punishing them would be horrible in a man, in a God of Love it is unthinkable. The Old Testament may have been God's message to the Hebrews; for the most part, and here I would except the social teaching of the prophets in particular, it is certainly not His message to Christians to-day.

The old-fashioned Evangelical, however, received little harm from his belief in the high value of the Old Testament, since he paid only lip-service to its writers; with strange perversity he professed to think that everything that they wrote was inspired by God, and then, shutting his eyes to their plain teaching, he twisted it so as to make it fit into his own preconceived system. The method by which this process was carried through was largely that system of interpretation usually called allegorical. Thus the Evangelical is in exactly the same position as the Schoolmen of the Middle Ages, who, "holding to a traditional belief in the *plenary* and *verbal* inspiration of the whole Bible, and remorselessly pursuing this belief to its logical results, had fallen into a method of exposition almost exclusively *textarian*. The Bible, both in theory and in practice, had almost ceased to be a record of real events and the lives and teaching of living men. It had become an arsenal of texts; and these texts were regarded as detached invincible weapons to be legitimately seized and wielded in theological

warfare, for any purpose to which their words might be made to apply, without reference to their original meaning or context".¹

Strangely enough, allegorical interpretation was, in theory at any rate, rejected by most of the Reformers. Luther, with his usual coarseness, called it "a beautiful and seducing harlot", "a monkey-trick"; even St. Paul's practice does not permit the Christian to follow his example except in using it as a means of ornament; whilst some of the patristic allegories "are not worth so much dirt". Here again Luther was both violent and inconsistent, since he himself can hardly escape the charge of making use of the very method which he condemned so harshly, and in his efforts to see Christ and the Gospels everywhere in the Scriptures he adopted methods of exegesis which cannot be termed anything else than allegorical. The robust common sense of Calvin, however, refused all such methods, and in the proof of Christian doctrine he will have none of their aid. For example, he will not allow that "seed" in Gen. iii. 15 (in spite of St. Paul) had originally any reference to Christ; the three travellers in Gen. xviii. 2, and the threefold "Holy" of Isa. vi. 3 are not to be taken as anticipations of the Trinity; nor must we see in the Burning Bush (here he contradicts Luther) a symbol of the Incarnation.

The younger generation will have none of such a system; words have their meaning, and that meaning must be respected, otherwise the system is dishonest, so they would say. To take a single notorious instance of an entirely new meaning being given to a passage. The challenge of Mal. iii. 10: "Prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall be no further need", was

¹ Seebohm, *The Oxford Reformers: Colet, Erasmus, and More*, p. 17, in *Everyman's Library* edition.

taken in a spiritual sense, and as such expressed a sentiment which could be reconciled with the teaching of Christ. But in its context the verse is one of the worst examples of what has been called "commercial piety" in the whole of the Old Testament, a book in which "commercial piety" is the prevailing type. What Malachi actually says is: You have had bad harvests because you have been robbing me by not paying my priests their full stipends: put me now to the test, pay the full tithe, and in return I will give you a "bumper" harvest. To most Christians such a doctrine is absolutely repugnant, though it would seem to have been held by the well-known American evangelist who once urged a crowd of young business men to lay the foundation of a successful business career by taking Christ as their personal Saviour.

This commercial piety still makes a strong appeal to that lower middle class amongst whom Evangelicalism has mainly flourished. As men are themselves, such will they conceive God to be, and the average Evangelical congregation is often a collection of tradesmen and shopkeepers listening peacefully to an exposition of the tranquil operations of their divine archetype.

At the same time there is much in the Old Testament which can never lose its value, and in particular the courageous social teaching of the pre-Exilic prophets with their protests against the substitution of ritual for moral obedience. After the Exile religion fell almost entirely into the hands of the sacerdotal party, but even so here and there wonderful manifestations of spiritual religion crop up, such as the protest of the Three Children (Dan. iii. 18) and the cry of Habakkuk (iii. 17 f.), so far in advance of the prevailing materialistic religion of the Old Testament, and even of that of professing Christians to-day, who consider that in a bad year there should be no Harvest Festivals.

Young people will be saved much pain and unsettlement

if they are told from the first that just as the moral teaching of the Old Testament falls far short of the Christian standard, so too the picture of God presented in it is imperfect; and that the Christian is bound by the one as little as by the other. The judgement of the child who said: "Mummy, I hate God, but I love Jesus," showed real insight.

Those who have been brought up to believe in an infallible Bible, even though by God's grace they may gain their freedom from it, are never or but rarely the same as other men. The mark of their struggle is upon them, and in times of difficulty there is often a wistful looking back. The coming strength of the Evangelical party lies in the fact that, whereas the past generation had to find for itself a firmer basis for its faith than the belief in an inerrant Bible, a whole generation has now grown to manhood which has no need for any such emancipation, because from the first it has been accustomed to regard the Bible in the light of modern knowledge.

The problem which perplexed our fathers in the latter part of the last century still faces us. Are we to abandon the Bible altogether as an authority, or are we to rebuild its authority on deeper foundations? Surely the latter is the only policy for members of the Church of England; and to those who have any knowledge of the true facts about the growth and collection of the books of the two testaments it is not a very difficult process.

God, our Father, is ever trying to reveal Himself to His children, but His revelation is entirely dependent upon man's ability to receive that revelation. Man's capacity for knowing God is a thing which, like his conscience, develops with new knowledge and experience in the race: hence what is revealed becomes gradually higher and purer. So the revelation in Jesus, the divine Son of Man, is incomparably higher than that through the prophets; it was the same God

who was revealed in each case (though at times it is hard to believe it); the medium in the one case was imperfect, in the other exactly adapted to its purpose. I think that an analogy may be found from wireless. Sound waves have always been broadcasted since first sounds were made, but man had no means of receiving them beyond a limited range. Then gradually he found that certain instruments vastly increased his powers. The earlier receivers were imperfect and the message was blurred and indistinct, not because of any fault in the original, but because the instrument was not capable of a better rendering, or because atmospherics or some other outside hindrance interfered with it. So when we read of the God of the Old Testament as delighting in war, as cruel and vengeful, we must not put that down to the revelation itself, but to the imperfect instrument through which it was given, or to spiritual "atmospherics", the poverty of the prophet's environment.

(b) SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

In the social and economic sphere the Church is called to a more general study and understanding of the hopes and ideals of the rising democratic movement. The Church is called also to give its support to those adherents of the movement who are definitely desirous of basing it, consciously or not, upon principles which are ultimately those of Jesus Christ.¹

The needs of the times urgently demand a continual restatement of His teaching from pulpit and platform in terms of present-day social ideals. Unless this is done, the desire for better conditions may be limited to material things, and all ideals lost. "I am perfectly certain of this",

¹ "The democracy of to-day is Christian in its valuation of personality and its conception of a regenerate human society" (Bethune-Baker, *The Faith of the Apostles' Creed*, p. 196).

said Mr. George Lansbury, "that in a mere fight for bread and butter, without having an ideal in front of you, and without having the religious fervour and enthusiasm that religion gives, it is quite impossible to hope for the reformation of the world."¹ Evangelicals must be willing to co-operate with all men of good will, whatever may be their religious opinions, towards the carrying out of this end, which is in reality the attempt to establish the kingdom of God "on earth as it is in heaven". Evangelicals need then to emphasize more than ever they have done in the past the Gospel of the Kingdom; to base their faith, not merely on man's need of God, but also on God's need of man. The end of their efforts should not be so much the salvation of individual souls—this is rather a means than an end in itself—but the permeation of the whole of society with the spirit and teaching of Jesus.

This is a hard doctrine, for Evangelicalism by its very nature is interested in mankind mainly as a collection of individuals, as souls capable of redemption. The attitude of the Evangelical towards the question of the function of religion in industrial and social problems might thereby seem to be prejudged already. Religion being primarily a matter for the individual would have no concern with such problems save as the individual conscience might be moved or stirred to promote a better system of affairs. But that such is the proper attitude of Evangelicals is disproved by two considerations, one a matter of history, the other of fundamental principle.

The fundamental principle is that since man, even converted man, is greatly influenced by his environment,² no

¹ Quoted in *The Modern Churchman*, vol. ii, p. 209.

² "Personal character depends largely upon the general principles and assumptions of the society to which the individual belongs", says the Archbishops' Commission (*Christianity and Industrial Questions*, p. 1).

man can be expected to live an entirely Christian life until his environment is become entirely Christian. If the law of Christ is not applied to social and industrial conditions, those who work under them are bound to be adversely affected by them. No man can be fully saved (i.e. be like Jesus Christ) except in a saved world. To the Evangelical, with his intense belief in individuals, any system which tends to injure personality and to cripple the development of individuals should be suspect at once. As society is at present constituted, such a crippling is inevitable. The report of the Archbishops' Committee on Christianity and Industrial Problems contains the following passage: "The sanctity of personality is a fundamental idea of Christian teaching; it is evident that Christians are bound to judge their industrial organization by that principle and to ask whether in modern history human beings are regarded always as ends and never as means. We do not venture to give a dogmatic answer to that question. But we submit that the criticism which the thoughtful workman passes upon the economic system is that it often treats him and his class as instruments of production, and that this criticism is a very weighty one, because it cuts to the root both of modern industrial relationships and of modern social ethics" (pp. 14 f.).

The other consideration is the notable circumstance that the names which perhaps above all others are prominent among social reformers, Wilberforce and Shaftesbury, are those of Evangelicals, and that, moreover, these men were inspired by their religious beliefs to undertake their philanthropic labours. At the same time it is possible and even easy to hold exaggerated views of the importance of these great Evangelical social reformers, and to regard them as men entirely unique in their time. The truth of the matter is that the rise of the Evangelical Movement co

incided with a new awakening on the part of men everywhere to the evils which were afflicting their fellows.

This awakening was in a large measure due to the French Revolution, a movement which first revealed to many the intolerable conditions under which their fellows were living. Political sympathies and prejudices could not stand before such overwhelming wrongs, and many of those whose hearts and consciences were touched were politically opposed to the Revolution and deeply shocked by the methods which accompanied it. The wrongs, the hardships, the inequalities had been there all along; the flame of a great political combustion was necessary before men could be made to see them and could be made to recognize that they had a duty to reform them. It is true that before this great event there had been philanthropists, men like Beccaria, who had denounced the cruelties of the prison system, and our own Howard, who had pressed for reform as early as 1773; but they were isolated voices.

Amongst the early Evangelicals there was no uniform attitude even towards so obvious an evil as Slavery, for such it seems to the conscience of to-day. Whitefield himself was the owner of slaves, and indeed resented efforts made to restrict the trading in them; whilst John Newton never seems to have seen the least wrong in the traffic or offered a single word in his defence for having practised it. An evil implants itself so firmly in the life around it, and becomes so much a part of it, that even a sensitive conscience cannot always be relied upon to separate it and denounce it as such. Hence the truth emphasized above that only in a Christian environment can men live lives entirely Christian.

The great men whose names are known to all as Social Reformers among the Evangelicals by no means stood alone. There were many smaller or less prominent Evangelicals who took a deep interest in the material welfare of their

fellows, and who, labouring indefatigably to improve social conditions, were resolute and courageous in denouncing social abuses.¹ Others were amongst the pioneers of popular education; indeed, the Evangelicals pressed this so hard that by some they were denounced as Jacobins. In the matter of Temperance, too, the name of Close, the famous and autocratic Vicar of Cheltenham, should not be forgotten. He it was who helped to start the Church Temperance Reform Society in 1862, and became President of the Church of England Temperance Society in 1873.²

To the older Evangelicals questions ethical admitted of direct and infallible answers. Were they not all provided for in the Divine Law? Morality for them was a fixed and rigid thing, and their interpretations of the moral law were often arbitrary and even cruel. But ethical problems do not admit of an easy solution; mankind will not readily fit into absolute categories. In theory we can imagine good and evil as separate things existing in the pure state, just as we can imagine a straight line or a pure colour. In real life good and evil are never found in the pure state, but always mixed with one another. Herein lies life's tragedy and at the same time its hope. In a melodrama the villain is obviously the villain, the moment he crosses the stage the gallery hisses him; the heroine likewise is something too fair and pure for this harsh human air. But in great dramatists such absurdities are avoided and real men and women with mixed motives and ambitions are presented to us. The good is

¹ An example may be cited in Henry Moule, the saintly Vicar of Fordington, and father of the late Bishop of Durham. He was the inventor of new and effective methods of sanitation which are still widely used. See *Bishop Handley Moule*, p. 4.

² Not all Evangelicals, however, were like-minded. G. W. E. Russell says of his parents: "Teetotalism was looked upon with suspicion, if not disfavour. It was regarded as being a subtle form of 'Works', and tending to self-reliance and self-righteousness" (*A Short History*, etc., p. 135).

mingled with the evil, and even in the blackest hearts there are grains of pure gold. In Shakespeare this is seen in complete splendour. It is the unselfish ambition of Lady Macbeth which leads her to commit a crime, and it is the loving daughter, not the selfish ones, who wrecks the heart of King Lear.¹

In its ethical teaching the Evangelical party, like the other schools of thought in the Church, has tended to emphasize the negative virtues rather than the positive, and so has given to more vigorous types of social reformers the idea that it is rather concerned to defend existing rights than to reform existing wrongs. The sins denounced are mostly those against good order and private property; the sins of the spirit, pride, anger, and malice, seem perhaps to have less attention. Furthermore, they have failed to see the necessity of discovering the root principles of Christ as they apply, not to the individual soul (this they did admirably), but to the community and to every relationship of life. To them the Church is an organization for looking after the poor and fatherless, not one which need make it its business to challenge the system under which they were produced. In other words, the Church is to be an ambulance corps, as Höffding puts it, to the army of progress, not the pillar of fire and cloud which moves at its head.

One great social change which must be faced by Evangelicals is the altered status of women. More than a hundred years ago Condorcet prophesied that "the equalization of the rights of men and women would be one of the most important and beneficial features of progress in the future". This prophecy has received an almost complete fulfilment, and one of the most striking features of recent social and political history has been the recognition of woman's true

¹ I owe this illustration to Bishop Temple, *Mens Creatrix*, pp. 137 ff.

place in the Commonwealth as the comrade and equal—though diverse—of man. The consequences of this recognition for the Church have yet to be worked out, and the necessary limitations, if any, to which it must be subject laid down.¹ If women are not at the present to be welcomed as ordained ministers of the Gospel, they must at least be given a more important place in the Church's councils than ever before.

In modern times the Evangelicals were amongst the first in the Church of England to give anything like a true value to women's work, and not a little of its earlier success was due to the labours of godly women like Selina Lady Huntingdon (she was strictly a Methodist rather than an Evangelical) and Hannah More. At the Church Congress of 1862 Dean Howson sketched as an ideal the giving of themselves by all classes of women to the work of the Church as the one business of their lives, though he did not commend the Roman or High Anglican system of taking vows.

In recent years the Evangelicals have largely failed to enlist the services of women of education; and one looks in vain for any to correspond to Miss Sellon, with her long years of devoted labour in Plymouth, or with the women whom T. T. Carter was able to gather round him at Clewer. Is it necessary that educated women should be organized on a conventual basis if they are to devote themselves utterly to the service of the Church? It is true that women's work has never been neglected by Evangelicals, but the efforts put forth have resulted in the establishing of interdenominational institutions like the Ranyard Biblewomen and the Mildmay Deaconesses founded by William Penne-

¹ We need hardly to-day feel that St. Paul has precluded discussion of the question, for though he did undoubtedly forbid women to speak in the congregation (1 Cor. xiv. 34 f.), he also proclaimed that in Christ Jesus there was neither male nor female (Gal. iii. 28), a principle which seems to have very definite corollaries.

father,¹ Vicar of Christ Church, Barnet, and afterwards of St. Jude's, Mildmay Park. These efforts undoubtedly gave to the Church very devoted women workers, but they were not highly educated nor drawn from the best ranks of society.

Mr. Warre Cornish gives it as his view that: "The experience of more than half a century among Church people, High and Low, Roman Catholics and Nonconformists, teaches the same lesson: that the business of evangelizing, civilizing, and nursing is best carried on by women devoted to the work, whether permanently and by consecration, or without conditions; living in communities and under the rule of which obedience forms a part, wearing a distinctive dress, and more or less under clerical supervision. Social distinctions may be recognized or neglected; where the institution is in most thorough working they are least regarded. The practical side of the work depends upon its spiritual side, partly because direct religious teaching is a civilizing influence, but more because spiritual enthusiasm more than any other motive makes the work possible, and supplies the strongest bond of sympathy and encouragement among the members of the community."²

There are but few parishes in which a body of women workers organized on these lines can work, expense alone forbids it. But on a small scale the experiment of having a body of educated women living together and working in a single parish has been tried in the parish of West Ham, where Canon Guy Rogers established a hostel for University Women. This experiment is an interesting one and unique in its way, but up to the present it has not been sufficiently

¹ It is interesting to recall the fact that in this effort he had the support and encouragement of Florence Nightingale.

² *History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. ii, p. 81.

well endowed to make permanent provision for its future. It is a challenge to Evangelicals to prove that they too can find women ready and willing to devote themselves to an arduous task, not merely for a few years, but as a definite life-work, as their High Anglican sisters are in the habit of doing. In women's work, as in other fields, always excepting the work overseas, Evangelicalism seems to fail to stir the imagination of the more cultivated members of the Church.¹

(c) ÆSTHETIC RECONSTRUCTION

The appeal of beauty has on the whole made but little impression on Evangelicals. In their nature is much of the Puritanism which sees in beautiful things merely the snare of the evil one, a siren voice luring them from the stern pathway of duty. That beauty has its dangers would be readily admitted by the æsthete. Plotinus long ago saw that man might be content to linger amidst mere sensuous images and fail to rise to the heights where Beauty itself, the ideal form, was to be found.² Owing to their distrust of beauty, Evangelicals are always in danger of sinking down, true spirituality having evaporated, into a state of "stagnant pietism and turbid middle-class Philistinism", which makes it impossible for those of deep artistic perception to be drawn to them. Yet the religion of Jesus Christ as seen in the lives of His followers should be a beautiful and joyful thing, full of attractiveness and romance; to have a fear of the beautiful really betokens a morbid and unenlightened type of mind. Charles Kingsley had a much nearer concep-

¹ Speaking of one of her characters in *Dangerous Ages*, Miss Rose Macaulay says: "If Gerda were to turn from secularism it would either be to Anglo-Catholicism or to Rome. Or Gerda might become a Quaker, or a lone mystic contemplating in woods; but a Broad Evangelical—no. There was a delicate, reckless extravagance about Gerda which would prohibit that" (pp. 67 f.).

² See Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 93.

tion of the truth when he wrote in one of those strange letters of his to working men: "*Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful. Beauty is God's handwriting—a wayside sacrament; welcome it in every fair face, every fair sky, every fair flower, and thank for it Him, the fountain of all loveliness, and drink it in, simply and earnestly, with all your eyes; it is a charmed draught, a cup of blessing.*"¹

God Himself is beauty, as well as righteousness and truth, otherwise He would hardly have made the world such a beautiful place. There must be behind all the wonders of Nature, the glow of the sunset, the restless loveliness of the sea, the stately march of the clouds, what Bishop Gore called "a spirit of beauty in the universe which communicates with and corresponds with the faculty of beauty in man".²

If God then is beauty and One who delights in the beautiful, it follows that His worshippers must also delight in beauty and show forth their delight in their lives. It is not given to all, nor indeed to many, to have beauty of form or of feature; but that highest and most lasting type of beauty, a beauty indeed without which the other is but a mockery and a sham, beauty of expression, can be the possession of all. "The saints, too, have their place in the house beautiful", exclaims one ardent soul, and with perfect truth. None the less, every type of beauty must be received with thankfulness as being a revelation of the one perfect beauty.

A haze on the far horizon,
An infinite tender sky,
The ripe, rich tint of the corn-field,
And the wild geese sailing high;
And all our upland and woodland,
The charm of the golden rod—
Some of us call it "Autumn",
And others call it "God".

¹ Charles Kingsley: *Letters and Memories*, p. 68.

² *Belief in God*, p. 54.

To the religious man who offers worship to God the form of his services is an opportunity for the expression of beauty. To worship God in "the beauty of holiness" is indeed the first and essential requirement, but in addition we may worship Him in "the beauty of the sanctuary", as the words may also be rendered. The church, God's house, should be at least as dignified and as beautiful as the houses of His worshippers. Hence we have need of noble and stately buildings and lovely decorations. "The pure and incorruptible Gospel", said E. H. Bickersteth, "will not sound the less sweetly because the House of God in every part of it, within and without, bears witness to the loving earnest care with which we regard all things connected with His service and worship."²

So, too, not only the house itself calls for beauty, but the services which are held in it. It is to be observed that religious truths tend to express themselves, not only in dogmas, but also in appropriate acts; they attempt to embody themselves in prescribed rites. But when the rites have once received the approval of custom and become sanctified by continual use, it is difficult to alter them. In his religious acts man is exceedingly conservative, perhaps by inborn instinct, for in the early days of the race the correct and exact performance of the ritual acts was essential to the obtaining of the favour of deity; any new departure was therefore made at a great risk: it might "come off", or it might not. This inborn instinct for the exact performance of rites is not peculiar to religion; it is found, together with a notable fondness for ritual, in organizations such as the friendly societies. Rudyard Kipling is expressing a great truth when he makes one of his Masonic characters say: "All Ritual is fortifying. Ritual's a natural necessity for mankind. The more things are

² Quoted by Balleine, *History of the Evangelical Party*, p. 234.

upset, the more they fly to it. I abhor slovenly Ritual anywhere".¹

The importance which we attach to the due performance of ritual acts should not, however, become so exclusive that it absorbs all our religious energies and eventually becomes the entire essence and end of our devotional life. We do not want to breed a new race of Evangelical "spikes". At present there seems little danger of such an exclusive interest in æsthetics amongst Evangelicals, and our need is to stimulate our own artistic impulses. "The Evangelical Church", as Mr. Herklots writes, "instead of being hopelessly left in the rear in the general development of art and beauty that is characteristic of all our modern buildings, both public and private, and the redecoration of our older ones, must stand in the forefront of this advance. Instead of being ugly and unattractive because it is Evangelical, it should be beautiful and attractive because it is Evangelical. There should be a gradual evolution of a specific type of simple beauty which should become a characteristic feature of the Evangelical Church."²

Evangelicals as a body have been too ready to leave ritual development to other schools of thought, and these schools have mainly been content with following ancient uses or with copying modern Roman developments, sometimes with extraordinary results.³ We need to make experiments towards the discovery of a new use which shall express modern "values" and ideas, and yet be characteristically English.

¹ *Debits and Credits*, p. 61.

² *The Future of the Evangelical Party*, p. 102.

³ A certain Jesuit who became an Anglican happened to stray into a very advanced ritualistic church, and came out in a state of breathless wonder, having witnessed on an ordinary Sunday ritual acts performed by the priest which in his late communion, so he averred, were only performed on one Sunday in the year, and then by none except the supreme Pontiff himself.

No longer can we be content with Latin borrowings or even with primitive native uses.

The position of the celebrant in the service of Holy Communion is still regarded in many quarters as a sign of party,¹ but many Evangelicals now adopt the so-called Eastward position. They adopt it because it seems to them to have greater dignity, and to promote the sense of corporate worship more readily, since the priest and the people all face the same way. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that the north end "represents far better than the other the principles of openness and visibility which the Reformers emphasized. The Lord not only uttered words for His disciples to hear, He also performed actions for them to see".²

Evangelicals do well to think out their attitude towards the question of the ritual of the Communion Service, for there can be little doubt that religion will become more and more sacramental. In the sacraments the soul finds regular supplies of nourishment and a refuge from the moods and changes which beset the religious lives of most people. Times of insight and deep feeling come but seldom to the average man; the function of religion, and in particular of the sacraments, is to carry the inspiration derived from them into his everyday life.

How should I praise Thee, Lord, How should my rhymes
Gladly engrave Thy love in steel,
If what my soul doth feel sometimes,
My soul might ever feel.

No sure and certain growth can come from the perpetual attempt to renew certain highly emotional states, and

¹ The great Evangelical Home Mission Society, the Church Pastoral Aid Society, for example, still insists that the prayers shall be said facing south.

² Dr. A. J. Tait, quoted by Herklots in *The Future of the Evangelical Party*, p. 181.

without them, in the absence of sacramental teaching, the believer is apt to become depressed and unsettled. Once the idea of the sacraments—not as anything magical or mysterious in a bad sense—has been grasped, a new state in the religious life, a stage of quiet, perhaps at times almost imperceptible, growth begins. According to a writer in the *Guardian* of January 28, 1927, this type of religion is the prevailing form of Evangelicalism in Cambridge at the present time. "Cambridge", he says, "is still as predominantly Evangelical as Oxford is predominantly Anglo-Catholic; but the type of its Evangelicalism is changing; it is becoming sacramental. There is a new longing for fellowship, a new appreciation of the life of the whole Body of Christ in our midst. . . . We are beginning to learn that the one genuine Christian Fellowship can only and can always be found among people to whom Christ is everything; on the way to Him we can find help from every type of Christian experience."¹

The conception of all true beauty as something in which God Himself delights, or even as something which reveals Him, is an important one for Evangelicals to grasp, since with them the idea of "separation" is so vital. If beauty is not from God, then it is a danger and something to be avoided as "worldly" in the bad sense. If it is of God, as I firmly believe it to be, then it is to be encouraged and cultivated.

The whole matter of "separation" is one which needs much deep thinking over. Evangelicals as a whole would be agreed in principle, they would differ in practice. This is no new state of affairs; it existed when Douglas Thornton was an undergraduate at the end of the last century,² and has

¹ The writer pays a well-deserved tribute to the work of Canon E. S. Woods, Simeon's successor at Holy Trinity, for the development of this new type of Evangelicalism.

² See *D. M. Thornton*, pp. 23 f.

always done so. No real keenness can exist without "separation", and in later years Thornton could write: "I pray God to keep alive a band of Puritans, for they are the ones that make the best missionaries all the world over." But here a danger arises from too narrow a conception of vocation. Not all are called to be missionaries, not all must dedicate their lives to the spread of the Gospel in foreign parts. When our Lord called Andrew and Peter, James and John, by the lakeside of Galilee, He surely did not mean that the craft of fisher was to be neglected. The work of the world must be done, and those who do it as a piece of service, as their part of bringing in the kingdom, are as much Christ's servants and living dedicated lives as those who lay them down in distant lands.

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